Adventures

OF

NAUFRAGUS.

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OF

NAUFRAGUS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

There is a special Providence in the fall of a Sparrow!

HAMLET.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY SMITH, ELDER, & Co. 65, CORNHILL.

1827.

J. Darling, Printer, Leadenhall-Street, London.

PREFACE.

It is not in mere compliance with a custom that I introduce this little work with a Preface, but from my conviction of the necessity of one.

From the titlepage, the reader may possibly be unable to ascertain whether the subject of the narrative be real or fictitious. I therefore think it incumbent on me, not to leave that point to conjecture. It is a faithful narrative of the trials and adventures of a man, who, feeling that his course had been no common one, and conceiving that a published record of it may be as useful to others, as the experience which it has afforded him has been useful to himself, cannot withhold it from the public.

To enhance the utility of the work, it is interspersed with occasional descriptions of places and objects, which, when new to me, made on my own mind impressions so strong, that it has not been very difficult for me to convey them to the mind

of the reader, in all their original freshness. With the same purpose still in view, an attempt has been made to render it a book of reference on several subjects connected with India, and of information as to the manners, customs, prejudices, and opinions of the Hindoos. But the reader may expect, not merely a didactic lesson, but instruction and entertainment blended. Indeed, the biographical portion of the work, though "an unvarnished tale," is a tale of events which may perhaps justify me in calling it, "a romance of real life."

In its compilation, I have spared neither care in the arrangement of my materials, nor anxious endeavours to attain that accuracy of style which is indispensable to connected narrative, and to fidelity of description. Whether I have succeeded in these respects, or indeed in any, I cheerfully leave to the decision of the public.

It now remains for me to acknowledge my obligations to that excellent work, "Dubois' People of India." It may not, perhaps, be unnecessary to observe, that the Abbé Dubois was a French missionary, who lived for many years among the Hindoos as one of themselves, conforming in all respects to their habits, customs, and diet; and I believe,

a more

a more just or authentic description of this people than that given by him, is nowhere to be found. His work is almost the only one to which I have had recourse, either for quotation or for reference; and to that, with the sole view of being enabled to mark the *origin* of such peculiarities as struck me, in the manners, customs, and opinions of the natives. In that particular, it has rendered me valuable service; for although his researches were confined principally to the Mysore territories, and my own observations to Calcutta, Hooghly, and their vicinity, both researches and observations are, with respect to the *characteristic* customs and usages of the Hindoos, (particularly of the Brahmans), which vary little or nothing throughout Asia, as mutually illustrative, as if both the one and the other were either equally local, or equally general.

With a few exceptions, therefore, the information afforded is entirely the result of my own experience and observation. But from experience wrong inferences may be drawn, and observation may be either deceived or eluded; and thus may have crept into my work those very errors which I have been most anxious to exclude. I hope, however, and even flatter myself, that they are

not

not numerous; but whether numerous or few, venial or unpardonable, I shall feel thankful for correction.

In selecting the name of "NAUFRAGUS," I was determined by the applicability of the ancient family motto—"*Naufragus in portum,*" to my own circumstances, both past and actual; and with respect to the names of the leading characters of the work, they are, with a few exceptions, also fictitious.

One word more:—the remotest intention of giving offence to any one, by the publication of these pages, is positively disclaimed; and the truth of this disclaimer will, I trust, be sufficiently manifest from the whole tenour of the work.

INDEX.

Coir

Lingin-Pulo

Sumatra,

ERRATA.

Page 51, line 3 from the top, *for* encroach, *read* encroached.
160, line 4 from the top, *for* guest, *read* quest.
172, line 10 from bottom, *for* rended, *read* rent.
178, line 18 from top, *for* creeped, *read* crept.
201, line 3 from bottom, *for* Here, *read* Her.

LIFE, VOYAGES, AND ADVENTURES

OF

NAUFRAGUS.

AT the period of my birth, which took place in London, on the 6th of March 1796, my parents had just fallen from a state of splendid affluence, and were seeking happiness in the sphere of humble life. To this condition they were reduced by one of those visitations of adverse fortune which are by no means uncommon in the world, and which produce changes so marked, and transfers of property so sudden, that they cannot escape the observation of the most unobservant. Thus the poor become rich, and the rich are doomed at least to taste the cup of poverty; and hope and fear are in perpetual operation.

My later infancy was consigned to the protection of my maternal grandmother, who then lived in the enjoyment of great wealth and splendour in Finsbury-square: but from her fostering care I was taken at the early age of eight years, by a gentleman of the name of Barron, who became my uncle, by marrying my father's sister, with whom he received a fortune of five thousand pounds.

Mr. Barron was gifted by Providence with immense wealth, and influence, its inseparable attendant. Besides possessing innumerable sources of income, he was managing owner of an Indiaman. At his house I first saw my amiable and much esteemed friends, Mr. and Mrs. Neunborough, of whom I shall have occasion to speak in the course of the work: they were pleased to

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shew me the attention and tenderness of parents; and to this day my heart bears a sensible and grateful recollection of their friendship. Their country seat was situated in Lincolnshire, and it was agreed that I should proceed thither in their travelling-carriage, and remain with them a fortnight or three weeks, prior to my departure for Doncaster, where my uncle Barron intended to place me at boarding-school. The few weeks which I spent with my kind friends in Lincolnshire had been hitherto the happiest period of my life; but I was soon doomed to exchange the comforts of a home for the discipline of a public school, containing upwards of eighty boys, many nearly grown up, and all older than myself.

Many think their schoolboy days the happiest of their lives; and to those who have the relaxation of vacations—the relief of an occasional visit of, or letter from, a relation or friend—the benefit of little presents and attentions either from those friends, or by their direction, through the hands of their master—they may be the happiest: but to me, who was sent one hundred and sixty-three miles away from all the tender ties I had in the world, and who found myself at the vacations (with the exception of two spent with Mr. and Mrs. Neunborough) left at school, without ever hearing from, or seeing a relative or friend for four years, schoolboy days were any thing but that enviable state of happiness which I have heard so much eulogized.

But privations did not constitute the whole of my unhappiness: with them positive sufferings concurred, especially some inflicted with the whip. On the cold winter mornings we were at our desks by seven; and the many times I have crawled up, shivering, to receive on my already-benumbed finger-ends smart stripes from the cane, are yet fresh in my memory. As for the fire, never, even on the coldest days, did I derive any benefit from it, in consequence of the tyranny of the elder boys: and on the whole, I cannot bring my school days to mind, without feeling that I would willingly forego all the advantages of the brightest education, and the benefit resulting from a successful application of it—consenting to remain in unlettered ignorance, rather than again undergo the miseries of my school-days.

The hardships of my boyhood may possibly have impressed me with a rather gloomy, unsocial, or more properly speaking, *un-*

happy

happy turn of mind: it is at least certain that I had no chosen friend in the school—no playmate; for I loved not play as other boys loved it; my delight was to be alone. For hours, even in winter, would I wander, solitary, in the deep recesses of a wood, delighted with the awful stillness—the deep echo—or the howling of the wintry wind. I loved to hear the rustling of birds—to watch the playful squirrel—to catch a hasty glimpse of passing foxes, nothing fearful of me; and then to gather berries, until wearied nature sent me back to school.

In the summer still would I be alone, seeking shades remote from habitations—reclining on a mossy bank, and behold with enthusiastic wonder and delight, the glittering, golden scenes around me. With what rapture would I listen to the lark! and when I viewed the arched sky, of clear ethereal blue, as if I would *look it through*, how disturbing was the reflection, that I could not remain for ever where I was, at rest and happy!

My tasks I soon mastered, and made rapid progress in arithmetic, latin, and navigation; but all were in a great measure thrown away upon me: to study external nature, in her grandest forms, was my delight; and amidst the sweets of solitude, all labour was forgotten: my mind was entirely wrapt in admiration and wonder at the grandeur of a wood, or in delight with the beauty of a landscape, or the charms of a solitary walk, over a wide, dreary, deserted moor.

I have already stated, that in four years I spent two vacations at Mr. Neunborough's: it was during the last, when we were one day seated at dinner, that a letter was handed to him by the footman: he opened it, and had not read long, before he eyed me significantly, and said—"Naufragus, look sharp, my boy! you are to go to sea directly." I bowed compliance, very glad to be relieved from the thraldom, or rather, misery of school. I was to go, I understood, as midshipman in the East Indiaman of which my uncle was owner, and his brother, commander. The captain, with his young bride, was hourly expected, to take a farewell of Mr. and Mrs. Neunborough, before he proceeded to sea. In the mean time these friends were momentarily doing me kind offices, either in giving me good advice, or loading me with presents.

The captain arrived in the evening, with an intention of stay-

ing but one day, and starting on the following morning, at, as he styled it, the "*crowing of the cock.*" He welcomed me with such an air of apparent generosity and goodnature, that I instantly formed a favourable opinion of him.

The hour now came which was to separate me from my two kind patrons, the only beings in existence whom my heart had ever been taught to love. I was called up at four in the morning; the carriage and four was at the door. Mrs. Neunborough, kissing me with the sincerity of a mother, filled my pockets with silver, and conducting me to the good man's bedside, left me.—"Come hither, Naufragus," he said, sitting up, and leaning on his pillow: "now, my dear boy, you are going into a wide and dangerous world: here, take this," handing me a prayer-book; "forget not the author of your existence, and in the hour of trouble he will not forsake you: above all things, never neglect your prayers, and mind your duty: and here—here is some pocket-money for you. Go, now," he added, kissing my cheek, "and God preserve you for ever!" With my eyes full, though not fuller than my heart, I hurried into the chariot, and with the captain and his bride, was driven off rapidly for London. We reached the captain's house in the evening: I slept there, and in the morning was conducted by him to my uncle Barron. He looked at me silently for some time, and without saying a word, went away, and directed a man to see me inside the stage, which was to take me to the house of my father, who then tenanted one of Mr. Barron's farms.

In a few hours I was put down at the road-side, near a lane at the end of which, I was told, was my father's farm. The snow was on the ground, and I was proceeding anxiously onward, when I met a fine boy trundling a hoop, of whom I inquired how far off my father's house was. The lad stopped, and taking my hand tenderly in his, said, he was my brother John!

We were soon in the presence of our parents, whose tenderness and love, though I was, in a manner, strange and unknown to them, save by the ties of nature, were to my heart a consolatory balm, of which I had for years felt the want, and indeed I had never yet known. This comfort, however, was but of short duration, for, in the course of a fortnight, I was in a furious storm in the Bay of Biscay.

My

My uncle Barron fitted me out; or rather, sent a list of necessaries to a slop-shop in Leadenhall-street, without a measurement of my person, which were ordered for my use; the consequence was, my shoes were useless; the caps in my chest were made for soldiers instead of sailors; my uniform coat was so large, that the tail of it actually trailed along the deck; my check shirts, and sheets, which cost a great deal, were to me worth nothing; and in short, although I had a large chest full of clothes, they were any thing but *necessary* ones.

The voyage to Bombay and back was performed in sixteen months; and during the whole of that period, fortunately not a long one, the ship was a scene of continual tumult, insubordination, and wrangling. The captain bore the character of a "*smart sailor*," (as the technical term is,) but his measures were so excessively strict and arbitrary, that he was an object of dread to all on board: sailors, who had been flogged, deserted; while many gave themselves to the navy as deserters, and were taken away by the men-of-war's boats: passengers were put under arrest, from the captain's own table; they brought actions against him at Bombay, and recovered heavy damages; this threw the captain into a severe fit of illness, which well-nigh cost him his life, and from the effects of which he did not recover until the ship's return to England.

At sea I looked in vain for an encouraging smile from my uncle, the captain: he paced the deck with a haughty step, and clouded brow, without noticing any one:—

> "Seldom he smiled, or smiled in such a sort,
> As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit,
> That could be moved to smile at any thing."

The first time I was honoured with his notice, was on my way up the rigging to furl the mizen top-gallant sail: the ratlins, or as landsmen call them, "the ladders," were so far apart, (eighteen or twenty inches), that my little legs found it at first a hard matter to stretch so far; and I was plodding my dubious way up, to the best of my ability, when a voice like an "east wind, blowing through a cranny," squeaked out—"Tumble up, you young scamp!—Run! [stamping] run, I say! [stamping with

 vehemence]

vehemence] run up, sir! [again stamping.] There—that will do."

There were on board six midshipmen, all cooped up in one cabin, encumbered with their chests, (one of which, placed in the middle, served for a table), a large bread bag, dangling on the ship's side, half a dozen other bags, full of linen, a tin can or two, a tea kettle, hats, caps, watch coats, and a long eighteen pounder. The salt beef, pork, and biscuit, which were almost our only food, were so unpalatable, that I could hardly get down a mouthful; we had indeed a pudding twice or three times a week, but that was none of the best, being made by ourselves, in turn, and frequently boiled, for want of any thing better, in a bran new night-cap, or cotton stocking.

Of all lives in the world, that of a midshipman of an East Indiaman is the most distressing and contemptible: neither received by the officers, or obeyed by the seamen, he loses all the privileges of the latter, without having any of the comforts of the former. By the officers he is kept at a distance, and by the seamen held in derision: he is a mere walking candlestick; the principal part of his duty being to hold the candle to the officers in the ship's hold. The sailors are always watching for an opportunity to pilfer the poor middie's apparel; and frequently, the chest full, on leaving England a few weeks before, of valuable clothes, linen, shoes, and other necessary articles, is as empty as the poor fellow's bread-bag.

The duty I found the most arduous to perform, was that of keeping watch; which was regulated in the following manner: one night, I had to watch from eight to twelve, and from four A.M. to eight, leaving only four hours for sleep; the next night, from twelve to four, having eight hours sleep, (from eight to twelve, and from four A.M. to eight.) This was called keeping "*watch and watch*," and lasted during the voyage. Nor could I call even these few hours my own; for often, when my watch was out, after having just thrown my weary limbs in my hammock, has the boatswain's pipe of—"*All hands to reef topsails a-hoy!*" summoned me, at a minute's warning, to the mizen-topsail yard-arm, there to pull away to the sailor's cry of *hurrah!* amid the roaring of the tempest, and the lashing of the briny surge. If, in the day time, I had had allowed me a few

hours

hours for repose, I should have had less cause of complaint; but, throughout the day, I was either aloft, or in the ship's hold, with a candle, assisting in stowing or unstowing the cargo, and in clearing away provisions.

Nothing very remarkable happened during the voyage, if I except the fate of a sailor boy, named Kennedy, who fell overboard, in the act of reeving the ensign halyards at the extremity of the driver peak; in his fall, his throat caught the driver boom-iron, that projected over the stern, and received a deep incision, so that when he reached the water he floated: this circumstance (for he was no swimmer) gave us time to heave to, and pick him up; but to little purpose, for the poor boy was in a state of insensibility; and, after lingering in great agony, expired in the third night: his moans were appalling; and it was truly a happy thing for him to be released from his sufferings, and for the crew to be released from witnessing sufferings which they had no means of alleviating.

From the first, I was not at all impressed in favour of a sea-life; but being willing to hope I should like it better as I advanced in rank, and having set out with so emulous and ardent a spirit in the pursuit, and, moreover, feeling averse to confess to my friends in England, my dislike, I resolved to make another voyage.

On our reaching England, my uncle Barron, as owner of the ship, came on board at Gravesend: he questioned me particularly if I liked the sea, observing, that if I did not, he would send me out to India as a cadet.—"Consider well, Naufragus," he continued; "I may die, and without interest you cannot get on in the service: I know a chief mate, who has remained so for twenty years." I thanked him, but expressed a wish to go another voyage, if he was equally willing. "Oh, please yourself," said he, "only recollect, that a cadetship, if you live, is a sure fortune for you;" and left me, with directions to proceed with the ship to dock, and then to repair to his house.

To my infinite sorrow I learnt that my valued friend, Mrs. Neunborough, had been, for some time, an inhabitant of that country from "whose bourne no traveller returns;" and that I had no hope of seeing Mr. Neunborough, who had shut himself up in his country house, and would not see any one. I looked forward,

forward, however, naturally and with transport, to the pleasure of spending a few weeks with my father at the farm; but I miscalculated; for, during the whole day, my uncle kept me strictly, meal-times excepted, at his counting-house, writing out bills of parcels, &c. At eight o'clock every night he took me home to his house, and made me sit with him until supper-time or bedtime: thus my week days were spent, but on Saturday evenings, as he then went to his country seat, where he remained until the Monday morning, he allowed me to go to my father's, with particularly strict injunctions to walk thither *(nine miles and a half)* and back; never, on any account, to *ride*. This point was with him an object of such importance, that I one day incurred his severe displeasure, because I had accepted the offer of a gentleman who overtook me on the road, of a seat in his gig. I also anticipated the pleasure of having (what I never had in my life, either before or since I saw Mrs. Neunborough,) a little pocket money, my wages amounting to between forty and fifty pounds; but I was again disappointed; my prudent uncle pocketed it all.

My second voyage I went as midshipman in a ship of twelve hundred tons, bound to St. Helena, Bencoolen, and China. My outfit this time cost me dear, for my uncle, supposing I should bring back every article of apparel which I took out, and therefore not calculating on the necessity of giving me a second outfit, rated me severely for my negligence, and grumbled at the expence of every article which he had to buy: heartily glad therefore I was when this very delicate affair was finished, and myself once more in a cabin, side by side with another eighteen pounder.

The captain of my new ship had risen to fame and fortune from the rank of foremast-man; and that by one of those singular chances, which, "taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." At the period alluded to, he was boatswain of an Indiaman, which, when off the Cape of Good Hope, was in imminent peril of foundering in a storm. It was found necessary to cut away the fore-topmast; but such was the hazard attending this service, that at first no man on board could be found hardy enough to venture aloft, as the foremast itself trembled like a reed, and was momentarily expected to go by the board. In the midst of the confusion, the boatswain, nothing daunted, succeeded in reaching the

the fore-top, cut away the topmast, and descended in safety. As a reward for this service, the owners made him an officer of the ship; and in time, he rose to the command of her. He was a brave officer, and a good man; the only one in authority on board, who manifested any considerate and real feeling for the health, convenience, and comfort of the petty officers and seamen.

The second officer was instructed by my uncle "*not to spare me,*" but to "*give it me well,*" and "*make a sailor of me.*" My uncle, as I afterwards understood, had assisted him with a large supply of goods, on liberal credit; in return for which act of kindness, the officer conscientiously acted up to the very *letter* of his opulent friend's advice; nay, I believe, even exceeded it. No sooner were we out at sea, than he began to knock me about, on all quarters of the deck, and continued this barbarity, I may almost say, night and day, until he grew tired of it. He then hit upon a refined method of "*giving it me well,*" that of keeping me up at the mast-head all night, or on the drum-head of the capstan. On such occasions, nature, worn out, would make me fall asleep, when the watchful guardian of the night would order sailors to pour buckets of water on me, or, if that would not do, to throw the bucket at my head afterwards. At last the captain interfered, and frequently countermanded my tyrant's orders, by sending me to rest. This man had a singular way of grinning, and shewing his teeth, when pacing the deck. Whenever he got a little elevated, he invariably grinned, and, under the guise of punishment for negligence, practised refined arts of cruelty on all the poor middies of the ship.

I bore all his ill treatment with uncommon fortitude until we arrived, on our way to China, at Pulo-Penang. I then determined to free myself from the oppression under which I groaned, and which would soon have become insupportable. My plan was, to leave the ship before her departure; nor could the dread of being left destitute, friendless, and pennyless, in a foreign country, the language of which I was unacquainted with, shake my resolution for a moment. It is true, I dreaded my uncle's resentment; I dreaded the sentence which his severe temper, the effects of which I had alread[illegible] would, I knew, award to my delinquency; but [illegible]
fatal to my future prospects, [illegible]

escape from the ills which immediately awaited me. Another very awkward predicament in which I was placed, acted with me as additional inducement not to proceed in the ship. The midshipmen found it necessary to subscribe eight pounds each, towards the mess; and being supplied with funds by the captain and purser, by the authority of their friends, they easily raised the required sum; but my uncle had totally overlooked either the necessity or the probability of any advance of cash being needed during the voyage; so that my application was negatived with a positive and brief reply—"We have no authority from your uncle to make any advance of cash;" and, had I proceeded, I must have been excluded the mess.

There was on board an Irish youth, a fellow-midshipman, named Smith, to whom I had formed a warm attachment. He had evidently been brought up in the first circles of society, and was, on the whole, amiable in disposition, and pleasing in his manners. To him I revealed my intention; and we argued the *pros* and *cons*, for nights and nights together, in the midnight watch, without any material difference of opinion. His first suggestion was to present to the captain a written complaint, signed by all of us, against the second officer: next, he thought it the wisest way to "knock the monster on the head;" or, properly speaking, to "*give it him well,*" in turn: then again, he proposed, most earnestly, to accompany me; but, as he had contributed his share towards the mess, and as I should not have felt happy under the consciousness of having been the cause of any injury which might have accrued to him, in consequence of his leaving the ship, I insisted on going alone; and his other propositions we rejected as futile and useless. It was at last arranged, that my box, directed for me, at the British Hotel, should be packed up ready for my friend Smith to send on shore, in the first boat that might leave the ship after my departure; as we justly concluded that I should not be able to take it with me, without incurring too serious a risk of detection.

On the morrow the ship was to leave Pulo-Penang: the morrow then was to form an epoch in my life; my prospects were to change, possibly not for the better, since I was about to enter on a wide world, unknowing and unknown: driven to an act of such desperate resource, by the brutality of an enemy on the one hand,

hand, and on the other, by the inadvertence of my natural protector. During the night I slept but little, racked as I was with scorpion anxiety, and dreaming of appalling dangers; but the morning rays relieved me, and I then began my preparations by packing up my clothes, dressing myself, and pocketing all the treasure I had to begin the world with, and that was—one dollar.

At six in the evening I was ready: I went down on the gun-deck, and exchanged a farewell with Smith, who, actuated by friendship most sincere, invoked many a blessing on my head. The hoarse voice of my persecutor, bawling "Naufragus!" summoned me before him. I surveyed him steadily, and with a calm look, though conscious that I stood before him whom I should never cease to execrate as the man who drove me friendless on the world.—"What!" said he; "dressed so smart!—going on shore, I suppose? [ironically]. Here—give this receipt to the boatman who brought the cask of lime-juice, and tell him he may go."

The shade of evening had but just spread round the vessel, when I went on deck; a fall of rain, with a distant roll of thunder, and a heavy gust of wind from the shore, indicated an approaching storm. I hurried into the boat, and giving the receipt to the boatman, who was a Mahommedan, I desired him to shove me on shore, putting into his hand my all—the dollar, which worked a talismanic effect; for in five minutes I was, for the first time in my life, on the shore of Prince-of-Wales Island.

The feeling of sailors on leaving their floating home, to which habit has reconciled them, has been often the subject of remark: thus, I once heard the sailors of a ship called the Mary, when she was in flames in the river Hooghly, exclaim, with the greatest tenderness, as they abandoned her to her fate—"Farewell, Mary! —poor old ship!—good bye, old girl!" and some of them were seen to shed tears: and even I could not help, when the boat was conveying me on shore, taking a silent farewell of my ship—but especially of my friend Smith and the captain, both of whom I much esteemed.—"Here I am," said I to myself, when I touched the shore, "left, with all the world before me; and be thou, kind Providence, my guide!"

"Some

"Some natural tears I dropp'd, but wip'd them soon:
The world was all before me, where to choose
My place of rest, and Providence my guide."

My absence, I was aware, would soon be discovered on board: my first object therefore was to seek out a secure and convenient place of concealment for the night. For some time I rambled about the town of Pulo-Penang, with all the curiosity attending the first view of objects entirely new to the senses; the long wide streets and irregular buildings, with the waving cocoa and toddy tree, were novel; and the fragrance of the verdure after the heavy rain, was, to me, who had not been on shore for seven months, at once refreshing and delightful: but I recollected that this was not the time to indulge in curiosity or research, so I started onwards, and travelled on the high road for some miles, until a spacious wood-yard, full of massy pieces of timber, presented itself to my view, affording, as I thought, an easy and secure retreat for the night: fatigue and anxiety made this asylum, poor as it was, cordially welcome; and stretching myself out on a broad teak plank, under cover of a piece of timber, I, in a short time, fell into a profound sleep.

When I awoke in the morning, the novelty of the objects by which I was surrounded, the magnificence of the scenery, the sable cast of hundreds of natives, who by this time were in motion, altogether, conspired to make me consider myself an inhabitant of another world; but the painful reality was soon present to my mind; and then how deeply did I wish, all—life itself—to be some painful, turbulent dream! what bliss, I thought, to awake, and find myself relieved from the horrid reality, and in a state of happiness and peace; but, alas! it was no dream.

I got up, repaired to a murmuring brook close by, and after having washed my face and hands, pursued my journey towards a thick forest or wood, just in my front. The country seats I passed, the property of Europeans, were very picturesque, decked out with cocoa and palm trees. Fearing pursuit, I quickened my pace, and after having walked for three or four hours, found myself in the midst of the forest, and quite secure, I felt convinced, from the least risk of detection.

I journied on, the wood becoming thicker and thicker, so that it was with difficulty I made my way; but wishing to gain the summit

summit of a mountain just before me, in order to watch the motions of my ship, I persevered, and had nearly obtained my object, when a loud hissing noise assailed me from before. Not knowing but that the wood might be infested with wild beasts, or dangerous reptiles, I was at a loss what to do: to recede I would not; and after mustering a little resolution, I ventured on, expecting every moment some large serpent to rush out and attack me. The hissing became louder and louder as I advanced, and so loud at last that I made a full stand, looking about anxiously in all directions for my assailant, but in vain; and as the hissing ceased when I stopped, I availed myself of the opportunity afforded me by the apparent suspension of the expected attack, of allaying my hunger with a wild pine-apple, which I saw before me. Onward I still ventured, and the noise, which now resembled rather a rattle than a hiss, recommenced. I was astonished that I could not see any thing; at last, however, the bushes to the right of me shook excessively for some distance, but without developing the cause, and all at once the noise ceased.

After considerable labour, I reached the summit of the mountain at the close of the evening, and, to my great mortification, beheld my ship still at anchor, and waiting, as I naturally supposed, for my return, either voluntarily, or with a party who might be seeking me. On looking about, I found an uninhabited hut, with some large fishbones strewed about the floor. I plucked the leaves of some plantain trees, and having cleaned out the hut, made a bed with them. As night approached, I was delighted to behold the trees and bushes illumined by swarms of fire-flies, which resembled thousands of sparks, or spangles. My pleasure would have been greater, but for some unaccountable noises, such as roarings, croakings, hissings, and now and then a howl, all which combined, made me wish much for a candle, and some weapon of defence.

The moon rose in full majesty in my front; to the right the lights of Pulo-Penang and Fort Cornwallis were discernible, and around me was a vast expanse of wood. Tired at last of pacing the solitary summit, and racked with anxiety, hunger, and fatigue, I betook myself to my hut, and fell asleep.

At daybreak I beheld one of the sweetest scenes I think in nature. The sun had just risen above the horizon—the unruffled

sea,

sea, of a clear ethereal blue, embraced the glittering shore—the bold coast of Queda, divided from Prince of Wales Island by a channel*, two or three miles broad, presented itself in front; the town of Pulo-Penang, with Fort Cornwallis, and the surrounding country, smiling in all the gaiety of nature's best dress, were on my right; and beneath me the Indiaman (which in my present mood I looked at merely as an object in the scale) at her anchorage; while ever and anon birds of gaudy plumage, the cockatoo, the lory, and the paroquet, adorned the skirts of the forest. The whole prospect impressed me with indescribable delight; and made my heart acknowledge and adore with fervor the Divine Creator of all that I beheld, and implore his providence to direct my future steps, and to support me under any trials which might yet await me.

The sensation of hunger now became troublesome; nor had I any means or prospects of relief. At last I determined to descend the mountain, and remain in the skirts of the wood, until, favoured by night, I could venture to Penang without the risk of being taken: I thought that there I might probably procure something to eat—possibly employment. On my return through the wood, I was amused by the antics of a large monkey, which sprang from bough to bough, following me in my descent, apparently indignant at my intrusion into his solitary haunts.

I wandered in the skirts of the wood, and on the sea beach, picking up shells and corals, until dusk; and then boldly proceeded towards Penang. All this time I had my ship full in view, and was watching all her motions; indeed, not a man could move on deck, nor a sail be unfurled, without my cognizance.

Scarcely had I reached the town before I beheld, in a verandah, open to the street, a Portuguese man, with his wife and two little girls, eating their supper of rice and fish curry. I walked up to the group, and asked, by signs, for something to eat; they, however, one and all ran away, apparently alarmed, and left me to pursue my course. I next made my wants known by signs, as before, to two native Indians; and, by signs, they desired me to sit down on a mat on the floor, and to wait until they should bring something; but I felt alarmed on finding myself *locked in*, and,

* This channel is much frequented by the alligator.

and, without a moment's loss of time, let myself out of a small back casement, through which I could scarcely squeeze my body, and effected my escape. This incident determined me not to make any more attempts to gain assistance in the town, until my ship should have fairly gone away.

That night I slept in the wood yard; and the next day, in order to reach the summit of the mountain, again penetrated the recesses of the wood; but on my way through it, I found myself all at once in the midst of an Indian family, almost in a state of nudity, smoking, and squatted round a small fire. To this party too I applied for relief, still, of course, by signs, and to my great joy, an elderly black handed me a piece of new cocoa-nut; but this did not much allay my hunger, which was excessive: I, however, expressed my thanks in the best way I could, and proceeded up the mountain once more. Having reached the top, what were now my surprise and joy to behold my ship actually under weigh! By six o'clock she was a mere speck on the horizon, thus relieving me of an infinite load of anxiety and dread. It was too late to venture back to the town that night, so I slept in my hut, and early in the morning got up, and proceeded to Penang, which place I reached about eight o'clock.

In my first walk through the town, I had observed that I was an object of general notice; and I afterwards learnt that fifty dollars had been offered by my captain, as a reward for my apprehension; the motives of the two Indians for locking me in the room were then obvious enough.

Seeing a man in the dress of a native of rank following me very closely, I ventured to ask him if he spoke English?—"Yes, my lord."—"Well," said I, "tell me who is the greatest English merchant in Penang—I mean the richest?"—"Ogilvie, sahib."—"Good again," I replied. "Now then, my friend, pray take me to Mr. Ogilvie's house." In a short time I was ushered into a princely mansion, and soon in the presence of Ogilvie, sahib, (or Mr. Ogilvie.) I addressed him, saying that I presumed to call on him as a British merchant, to acquaint him with the step which I had taken, and the causes which had led me to adopt a scheme so desperate; and ended my tale, by requesting that he would either give me, or procure for me, employment on shore, in any industrious occupation; at the same time assuring

assuring him, that his aid would be found not to have been misplaced. He seemed perfectly astonished; and it was some time before he replied—"Young gentleman, I feel much for the unprotected state in which you are placed in this settlement; and, if I may judge from your appearance, you would not abuse any aid which I could afford you: but indeed you cannot remain in this island—the governor himself could not permit you to remain here: but if you will call—but no—here he comes—here he comes."

The entrance of a stout short man, with a good-natured face, arrested the harangue of Mr. Ogilvie, who rose up and shook his friend by the hand most heartily.—"Captain Lambert," resumed Mr. Ogilvie, "here is a young midshipman, who has left his ship from ill treatment, it appears, and who wants employment: can't you take him with you as second mate? You want one, I understand."—"The very thing, Ogilvie; and," said Lambert, turning to me, "you shall find good usage with me, however you may have been treated on board the Indiaman: I know well enough what they are, young gentleman."

I assured him my endeavours should not be wanting to prove myself deserving of any encouragement I should receive. To Mr. Ogilvie I expressed my grateful thanks, and, pointing to blackee, who had introduced me to his presence, I expressed my regret at not having it in my power to reward him. The captain told me to go on board the brig Jane, and, with his compliments to the mate, to request him to receive me.—"You'll find," he said, "the Jane's boat at the jetty stairs;" and added—"I will take care of blackee."

Upon this I retired, thanking God in my heart for this interposition in my behalf, and in a few minutes was on board the Jane, but almost famished, having fasted nearly four days, and without any clothes except those I had on; for, on inquiry at the British hotel for my box, I found that it had not been forwarded, doubtless in consequence of my friend Smith's want of opportunity.

The first object that struck me on my arrival on board, was the odd appearance of the chief mate, whose name was Tassit: he wore a red cap, a full pair of silk sleeping trowsers, and a white jacket: his countenance was equally remarkable—a visage of dark complexion, with thick bushy whiskers, and long mustachios, high cheek-

cheek bones, and large black eyes; he was a half-cast, or creole, of Bengal, but educated in England. Scarcely had I made my bow to this original, when a loud, confused jabber, proceeding from the main hold, of "*Marrega! marrega!*" attracted our notice; and, on looking down the hatchway, I beheld three or four lascars, with billets of wood, crushing a huge centipede, which twirled its long, elastic body round and round, in agony and rage, until killed. The jabber of the black sailors, and their novel costume, together with the heat of the hold, and the smell of the pepper and betel-nut, of which the cargo consisted, produced on my mind an impression unlike any I had ever before felt.

All hands were busy receiving cargo, which we were to leave at Malacca for some China ship expected there; and all possible haste was made to sail immediately. It was four o'clock in the afternoon when I went on board, and at five Tassit very civilly asked me down to tea. I readily obeyed the summons, and followed him to the cabin. There I found the leg and wing of a cold fowl, toast, biscuits, butter, a piece of cold ham, and a smoking tea-kettle in the hands of a lascar. Down I sat, opposite to my new friend Tassit, and began upon the fowl and ham, which soon disappeared; the toast and tea also vanished, and with equal celerity, Tassit all the while ministering to my wants with much patience and good-nature; and when I afterwards told him that that meal was the only one I had had for four days, he laughed immoderately; but suddenly checking himself, said, in a serious tone—"By all that's wonderful, I thought you would have killed yourself!"

After tea, we chatted until eight, and I understood that my pay was to be eighty Sicca rupees (£10) per month. This was indeed agreeable news, and, at Tassit's suggestion, I went to bed at ten; but scarcely had I got into a comfortable dose, when I was roused up to assist in getting the brig under weigh. This was done in about an hour; and with the full moon to light us, we sailed down the Southern Channel. The captain had not yet come on board, so it was agreed that I should take the morning watch, from four to eight, and to bed I went again.

About twelve I was requested to go to the captain, who had come on board, and had sent for me. I quickly obeyed, and went into his cabin, when the first object I saw was a friend of

 his,

his, who had come on board to bid him farewell, measuring his length on the floor, and quite drunk; next appeared to my view the noble captain himself, seated in an arm-chair, his two thumbs playing round and round, *à la* Ephraim Smooth, and his eyes keeping time. His face was round, plump, and as red as a furnace, and his head rolled round his large, square shoulders, quite mechanically; and it was not without some difficulty that he contrived to stammer out, after two or three slight interruptions from a tormenting hiccough—"Well, sir, have you got your things?"—"No, sir."—"No, sir! then what's to be done? what's to be done? (hiccough) wh—a—a—t's to be d—done?" falling gently backward into a "rest thee, babe" slumber. Supposing him fast asleep, I was about to take a silent leave, when, to my surprise, he, on a sudden, started half out of his chair, bawling out—"D—n it, what's to be done?" and once more he fell asleep. In a few minutes there appeared much to be done, for we had run ashore. We lay on our beam-ends until morning, Tassit all the while, quite unconcerned, smoking a small hand hookah, and talking about his dear intended, who was in Bengal, until the stars began to disappear, and the day to break, bringing the rise of the tide, and with it boats from the shore to our assistance. All hands were now actively engaged, and so continued until nine o'clock, when we again floated. We bade adieu to Penang, and a fair, gentle breeze, wafted us through the Channel, towards the Straits of Malacca. The captain very kindly gave me, from his private stock of clothes, six shirts, six white jackets, a red cap, six pair of trowsers, and a watch-coat, and always continued to behave to me in the most kind and friendly manner. Professing himself my best friend, he invariably supported me, whenever any difference between myself and Tassit, or the sailors, rendered his interference necessary. He is now dead; but if his spirit witnesses the feelings of my heart, which beat so high in gratitude and affection to his memory, he has full assurance that his kindness was not ill bestowed.

The scenery which we passed was transcendently beautiful. Our little skiff was wafted by a gentle, refreshing zephyr, and the lascars, in groups, were relating some of their marvellous tales, while Tassit and myself, sipping our tea, sweetened with China candy, and enriched with the milk of a favourite goat, were

were listening to the captain's descriptions of the different splendid or remarkable scenes which presented themselves. The sky continued, for many days, cloudless, and beautifully blue; and I may rank the evening hours of this day among the few really happy hours of my life. This period of enjoyment, especially in contrast with the sufferings which immediately preceded it, still refreshes both my memory and my imagination.

In a few days we reached Malacca, and, after discharging the pepper and betel which we had on board, prepared to sail for Pulo Lingin, an obscure Malay port to the eastward, seldom frequented by English traders. Previously to our sailing, as we were endeavouring to heave up an anchor left behind by some frigate, a black diver, who had dived for the purpose of ascertaining its exact situation, in consequence of the extreme difficulty experienced in heaving it up, remained under water so long, that we gave him up for lost. At length, however, he made his appearance at the surface, thus relieving us from our regret—but for a moment, however; for an enormous shark appeared almost instantaneously, snapped him completely asunder, and then swam away after the mangled remains, leaving the water, for a considerable space, dyed with blood. The shock to all of us, who were unable to render the least assistance, was truly horrific; and, for many months afterwards, a painful impression remained on our minds, in consequence of the melancholy fate of our unfortunate diver. The next day after this tragical event, we set sail, and on our passage through the Straits of Malacca, met the Java expedition on its return to Bengal.

In about three weeks we reached Pulo Lingin. The lofty peak so called, as seen from the deck of our little bark, on a clear day, had a grand and imposing effect. We had not been long at anchor before a canoe came alongside, with four Arabian chiefs, magnificently apparelled. The captain, suspecting them to be pirates in disguise, gave orders that the door of a cabin, in which was a large chest of treasure, should be locked. They said that they came merely to see the captain and the ship. Being received on board, they scrutinized, with rather suspicious minuteness, every thing within their view. On coming to the cabin where the treasure was concealed, and finding the door locked, they expressed great anxiety to have it opened. The captain, whose presence of

mind never forsook him, called to the *Cas-a-ab* for the key, telling them in Arabic " there was only a poor Christian lying there, who had died the day before," upon which they turned aside with symptoms of disgust, at the idea of seeing a Christian corpse, and precipitately returned on deck. One of the Arabs eyed me with expressive earnestness; which, indeed, was not to be wondered at, for a European lad had seldom, if ever, been seen in that part of the globe before. I was not more than fourteen years of age, with the glow of health on my cheek, and with long curly hair, as white as flax. The Arab then entered into conversation with the captain, expressing (as I afterwards learnt, to my no small astonishment) a wish to purchase me—nay, ventured so far, as to offer three hundred dollars for me. On being told that I was not for sale, he appeared much surprised, expressing, indeed, his wonder that the captain could refuse so large a sum for so young a boy; but endeavouring to account for the refusal, by observing—" He is perhaps some young prince, or a high cast Englishman, I suppose;" and after shewing off some consequential native airs, left us. No sooner were our visitors clear off, than the captain ordered all the small arms, and the four six-pounders, to be loaded, in readiness for an attack that night. No attack, however, was made, and the captain and myself went on shore the next morning.

We first paid our visit to the king, or rajah of Lingin, who was seated, cross-legged, on a cane mat, in a large hut. We were not suffered to approach his august presence without taking off our shoes and stockings, and were ordered not to advance nearer to his majesty's person than fifteen feet. The captain and I now sat down cross-legged, on a mat facing the king. He was an overgrown savage-looking Malay, with fat cheeks, a short flat chin, and a large mouth, down the corners of which ran the juice of the betel-nut, of a deep red colour, which gave him an appearance, at least in my eye, both terrifying and disgusting. We were surrounded on all sides by Malays, armed each with a crease, or dagger, probably poisoned, and whose countenances were marked with a ferocity quite in keeping with the rest of the scene. The captain broke silence by a flattering encomium on the king's improved looks, since last he saw him, and requested his acceptance of some costly and choice presents, which were produced.

produced. His majesty having accepted them, made some inquiries respecting me; he first admired the colour of my hair, then asked how many brothers I had—how old I was—and if I would like to stop in his dominions? and seemed quite pleased with my complimentary answers. Upon my expressing some surprise at seeing an organ in a corner of the room, he beckoned to one of his attendants to play it. A more villanous compound of harsh sounds I never before heard, but they seemed to please the Malay monarch mightily. He then ordered a flute to be brought me, which, as well as the organ, had doubtless been given him by some European, who well knew their use. I immediately received it, and, still in a sitting posture, played a few notes, to the surprise of the king and all the motley assembly.

The captain now rose to take leave, which we both did, by bowing very ceremoniously, and very low. We had not gone far, however, before we were recalled into the presence of the king, who, after we had again divested ourselves of stockings and shoes, and sat cross-legged on the mat, made me a present of the flute, and a bamboo salver full of sweetmeats. We were then allowed to depart.

After remaining at Lingin six days, during which time we were occupied in bartering piece goods and opium for block tin, we set sail for Pulo Minto, where we arrived in about three weeks. On our landing, we observed that the natives, who, as well as those of Pulo Lingin, were Malays, were less friendly and open than our Lingin friends; and the rajah would not grant our captain an interview: he was highly indignant, and half resolved to sail away without a cargo; but as this sacrifice would be too great, he reluctantly went on shore. He was by this time well aware of the treacherous disposition of the natives; and the first thing he did was to reeve signal-halyards on a prominent post on the beach, giving directions to Tassit to keep a good look-out, and, in the event of the union jack being unfurled, to hasten on shore with all the crew, well armed.

Pulo Minto is even a more lovely spot than Lingin: the scenery is indeed bewitching, not unlike that which the imagination might appropriate to the enchanted island of the Tempest; but, alas! no Prosperos, nor Ariels, nor Mirandas, were there: its inhabitants were very little, at least in my view, inferior in

manners, and in mental and personal endowments, to Caliban himself.

By dint of great activity and exertion, we completed our lading in about nine days, and without any closer intimacy with the natives than what was absolutely necessary. They evinced from the first no disposition to good fellowship; and on one occasion, when I approached a Malay prince, who wore a splendid crease, with a wish, expressed by signs, to be allowed to examine it, I thought I should have to pay with my life for my temerity, such was the savage malignity of his countenance, and the offensive manner in which he repulsed my advances.

We were on the point of departure, and, as we thought, had but to deliver over to the Malays a bale of piece goods, and five hundred dollars, due to them, when, to our dismay, we missed twenty-eight slabs of tin, represented to have been actually shipped on the preceding day, but which, as we afterwards found, had been very adroitly concealed by the Malays in the sand on the beach. No sooner had our captain made this discovery, than he ordered Tassit to go on shore immediately, and tell the Malay, that if the property was not given up, he would not only keep possession of the bale of piece goods, and the five hundred dollars, but report the case to the supreme government; and I was appointed to accompany Tassit. On rowing ashore, poor Tassit became more and more thoughtful, until a deep sigh would escape him, with—"Well, God knows how it will all end!" In the mean time, the brig got under weigh, and stood in shore as near as she could, her guns "grinning horribly," and the captain pacing the deck, with evident anxiety. We found the beach lined with Malays, and as our little boat crossed the surf, the countenance of Tassit assumed a most discouraging aspect. This, however, did not much intimidate me, for, armed as we were, each with two loaded pistols and a cutlass, I thought our boat's crew a match for them.

It was about four o'clock in the evening, when the gentle surf bore our boat on the sand, and Tassit, with an unwilling step, landed; that instant, a number of Malays seized and hurried him to a hut on the beach, and there surrounded him, making use of all the outrageous epithets in broken English and Malay, and using the most violent gesticulations of defiance and derision imaginable;

imaginable; one drawing a crease across Tassit's cheek, others forming a ring, and seating him on a mat in the midst of them. At that instant, I, who with the boat's crew had followed him, came into the ring to speak to one of the chiefs, and to endeavour to release my mate: "Look! my dear Naufragus, behold!" ejaculated Tassit, "what a dangerous situation has the rashness of our captain placed me in!" He said this in a voice, and with a manner so deplorable, and at the same time so irresistibly droll, that I could not refrain from laughing, although there were, at that moment, twenty drawn daggers at our breasts. I comforted Tassit as well as I could, and told the Malays I would go on board, and make known to the captain their demands.—"Iss, tell im," said one of the chiefs, "he not pay my dollar, not give my bale of piece goods, I cut away this man's throat." At this poor Tassit turned up the whites of his eyes, bellowing after me—"My dear Naufragus, make haste, or I shall be lost to you for ever." I made my boat's crew row with all their might, till, in a few minutes, I got on board. Never shall I forget the violent rage of the captain, when I told him what the Malays had done; he was as mad as the roaring sea—"Ah!" said he, "if you could but have unfurled the union jack, I would have settled the business in an instant, but that was impossible. Go on shore, Naufragus; tell the Malays that I hoist my nation's ensign; shew it to them; tell them, if they insult that flag, by keeping a British subject prisoner, my countrymen will come and blow the town to atoms: tell them, too, I will have my twenty-eight slabs of tin." A second time I went on shore, not, I confess, quite pleased with my mission; but deeming any misgivings discreditable to my duty, as well as to my honour, I spurned those intruders, and looking sternly at my crew, told them, in their language, to pull like devils! "Ah! ha! sahib," was the reply, accompanied by a loud cheer, which reanimated poor Tassit, whose drooping spirits were just then at the lowest ebb of despair. I again entered the ring, and they were all listening attentively to my interpreter, when, whiz! sang a cannon ball from our captain, which passed just above our heads. This produced a violent consternation among the natives; but they had no time for words, for another thunderer came, and struck a cocoa-tree close to us, the top of which was shivered to atoms. At this moment, the brig hoisted

 English

English colours. Tassit now expected every moment to be his last; and I retreated three or four paces, to keep my arms clear, and prepared for defence. A rush towards Tassit made me give up the poor fellow for lost, and breathless with apprehension, but nevertheless determined either to defend or avenge him, I hastily approached the spot with my crew, and was surprised at the changed expression of Tassit's countenance: his dark eyes darted joy, a smile of delight beamed on his cheek, and, turning to me, he said, "Go on board, my dear Naufragus, and tell the captain to cease firing; the Malays have agreed to his terms; and on the return of the boat, I am to receive the tin." With joy I delivered the message; the firing ceased; I took the boat onee more on shore, the tin was brought on board by Tassit, who shook the captain by the hand most heartily, and the captain, who was very fond of his chief officer, said, "Ah! my old croney, had they cut you in slices, I'd have revenged you, my boy!" This consolation, however, was received by Tassit in silence, who no doubt thought with Othello, "'tis better as it is." The dollars and the piece goods were then, of course, delivered to the natives. The captain afterwards went on shore, and was received with great respect by the king, who agreed to dine on board, with all his retinue, next day, which was Christmas day.

At an early hour, we were prepared for the reception of our royal guest: the rigging was decorated with the British ensign, and union jack; the American, French, and Spanish ensigns were spread on the quarter-deck; our guns, with six fresh charges at the side of each, were got in readiness to fire a salute; curries, sweatmeats, wine, brandy, and Hodgson's pale ale, graced a well-spread table, laid out on deck; while the captain, with his telescope, was looking anxiously towards the beach, for the embarkation of the king. Precisely at twelve o'clock, a large canoe, having in it three flags, and surrounded by a considerable number of smaller canoes, pushed off from the shore, and in about ten minutes the king arrived on board. He was a little fat man, with a lowering aspect, a flat nose, keen crafty-looking eyes, with a remarkably small chin. The moment he reached the deck, our six-pounders opened the salute, the thunder of which so alarmed his majesty, that, at his particular request, they were silenced.

The conversation then turned on the hopes of a continuance of friendship

friendship between his majesty and the English; numerous were the professions of veneration and attachment exchanged, till at length our royal visitor began to feel the effects of the bumpers he had swallowed, and at every fresh one he declared—"No nation in the world was like the English!" His attendants wore each a crease, and surrounded their king, as if apprehensive for his safety. At three he rose to depart, and a finishing bumper to the health of the king of England concluded the entertainment, with which our visitor was highly gratified, and returned on shore, with, on his part, reiterated professions of everlasting friendship for the English, and on ours, (when he was at a distance not to feel alarm,) with a salute from the guns.

We then proceeded to get under weigh; but my feelings were now to undergo a shock which I little anticipated, and which served to illustrate the unnatural, cruel practice of the slave trade—a beautiful girl, about twelve years of age, had been purchased by our captain for the sum of forty dollars, as a present for his wife in Calcutta. She was brought alongside in a canoe, shortly after the departure of the king, in a state sufficient to awaken sympathy and pity in the breasts even of those who were most accustomed to witness such scenes. She was "all tears," or rather, as if nature had exhausted itself, and denied to her the aid of tears to relieve her oppressed heart, she was insensible to all around, and wrapt in an agony of profound sorrow. Her hair, long, and black as a raven's wing, was flowing wildly over her face and shoulders: poor Yadhoo! how often have I thought of thy afflictions! alas! thy moans were unheard—thy sighs unregarded; our bark bore thee away, far, far from thy country, and the sacred breasts that reared thee, and thou wast doomed to bear thy griefs unsolaced and alone!

Soon the shore of Pulo Minto vanished from our sight. Wafted by a fair wind, and bending our course for Hindostan, poor Yadhoo was forgotten until the next morning, when she was no where to be found, though diligent search was made for her. It was at first supposed by all, that she had fallen a victim to her excessive grief, and thrown herself into the sea during the night; but on the third evening of our departure, she was found by one of the lascars, stretched at her full length, in the main chains, a prey to dread and misery, and reduced to a mere skeleton:

leton: her hiding-place was probably the hold, which it was not possible to examine thoroughly. Every care was now taken of her by the captain, who left untried no means which tenderness could suggest, to reconcile her to her fate; but it was not until six weeks had elapsed that she ventured to hold up her head. Frequently, when in the evening, or in the night-watch, she seated to leeward, have I listened to her wild native song; her voice was impressively plaintive, well suited to the melancholy notes she warbled, and so soft and tender, that I never, before or since, heard any music which went so directly to my heart. The music of the Malays is, I believe, generally allowed by Europeans to possess a mellowness and mournful sweetness peculiar to itself; and is, from its simplicity and wildness, considered to be eminently beautiful.

My soul delights in sensibility, so that it would respond to any melancholy object; and such was the impression which it received from the wild notes of Yadhoo, in connexion with its cognizance of her desolate situation, that I shall never cease to think of her, though an untutored Indian, but as one possessing a soul of rare sensibility: in short—"To feel, 'twas but to hear her song."

The voyage from Pulo Minto to Calcutta occupied a period of seven weeks; and certainly I never spent a happier time on shipboard. The captain was exceedingly fond of music, and about an hour after the tea-things were removed, wine, grog, and small hand-hookahs, being placed on the table, Tassit was looked to for his song as regularly as if it had been part of his duty. Then would he strike up his favourite air—"Away with melancholy," the familiar *fal las* of which delighted the captain so much, that if I were not scrupulously attentive to lend to them the force of my lungs, he would fly into a violent passion, and thumping the table with his Gunter's scale, bawl out—"Well, sir!" then came the *fal la,* with a vengeance. It was not, however, at all times, that I could compose my muscles sufficiently for the purpose, so ludicrous was the effect produced by the uniform twang of Tassit's voice, in the verse beginning with —"Why what's the use of sighing," by his wide-extended lanky jaws, and by his eye stedfastly fixed on one of the beams, from which he never ventured to move it, until it came to the delectable

able *fal la*. This scene was renewed every night until our arrival in Bengal.

On the 25th of January 1812, we hove in sight of the Little Andamans: it was a clear day, the wind blowing a gentle north-east breeze. We sailed close in shore, admiring the general beauty of the island—the green cocoa—the palm—the dazzling sandy beach—and the clear blue waters playing on its verge, and reflecting the sun's rays. The Andamans were at that time uninhabited; and a lascar was stationed at each mast-head to look out for any wreck, or for any signs of human habitation. Nothing, however, but the beach, with the beauty of the landscape, were to be seen.

In a few days a heavy swell announced our near approach to the sand-heads*; and soon afterwards a lascar at the foretopmast-head gave us the joyful news of a pilot schooner being in sight. At this intelligence the captain, who was all anxiety to see his wife and family, was delighted. In an instant our union jack was unfurled at the fore, while in less than an hour a beautiful brig hove to, close on our weather-bow, and sent a pilot on board. He was a fine young man, apparently about three-and-twenty, remarkable for his *penchant* for cheroots; never for a moment was he without one in his mouth, giving his orders at the same time, and chatting to us all, with ease and good nature: the pilot-schooner kept us company.

As we advanced, the Saugor sands became more and more conspicuous; at last a loud, rumbling noise, resembling that of thunder, which, as we approached the sands, increased to a terrific roar, the surge at the same time dashing over the breakers to an appalling height, inspired us with feelings not at all in unison with those of the pilot, whose features indicated complete self-possession. We were now hailed from the mast-head with "*land in sight*:" anxious to see Bengal, I ran up to the fore-top-gallant yard-arm, and my longing eyes were satisfied with a distinct view of Saugor Island on our starboard bow; shortly after, the East Indiamen, lying in Saugor roads, appeared in sight; and at six o'clock we came to an anchor. The captain was so overjoyed, that he had "Away with melancholy" three times that night,

* Sands at the entrance of the river Hooghly, as fatal to mariners as the Godwins in the British Channel.

night, and his other favourite songs in proportion; and the pilot, when joining in the chorus, convinced us of the strength of his lungs.

At daylight we weighed anchor, and passed Saugor Island, with a fair wind. In a little time the small craft, lying off Kedgeree, appeared on our larboard bow: with the wind and current in our favour, we soon came abreast of Kedgeree; and in a short time it disappeared altogether. We sailed up the river with wonderful celerity.—"Now, Naufragus," said our captain, "you will see the beauties of Hindostan, with its wonders, and all its princely luxuries;" while the pilot would ever and anon, as we approached the banks of the river, lend me his telescope to watch the approach of some thirsty tiger from the jungles, or crafty alligator from the river's depths. Tassit, smoking his hookah on the hen-coops, seemed wholly intent on the pleasure of a speedy interview with his beloved Sarsnee.

I went aloft, in the hope of a foretaste of the beauties of Hindostan; but I was disappointed: nothing but a low, flat, bushy country presented itself to my view in every direction.—"Where—where are the boasted beauties of India?" said I to Tassit.—"You will see—you will see," was his reply. Two tow-boats were now sent a-head to assist at slack tide. As we moved slowly and majestically up the river, by the light of a clear full moon, the silence around, interrupted only by the regular splashing of the tow-boats' paddles, and by the shouts of the boatmen, answering at intervals in a not unmusical voice, at first loud and cheering, then dying away gradually, the pilot's call of "*Than-Brhabar!* pull a-head!" produced a rather pleasing impression, but left behind a melancholy one.

On the third day an Arab ship passed close to us, on board of which were three Circassian beauties, who were distinctly visible, with the aid of the telescope; they were in their cabin, looking at us with as much curiosity as we at them; and certainly their complexions were so transcendently fair, and their features so beautiful, I could not be surprised at the high estimation in which the Circassian women are held throughout Asia.

As evening drew to a close, we saw the "Company's Gardens" to our left; and on our right "Garden-reach." All at once, a scene of magic splendour, which took possession of my senses,

burst

burst upon my view, and astonished me: the gorgeous palaces, which were no more than the garden-houses of civil and military officers, and merchants, were on a scale of magnificence totally unexpected by me; never had I beheld, nor have I ever since beheld, the habitations of men so intensely grand and imposing: the banks of the river, for a distance of three or four miles, were studded with palaces, disposed in an irregular line, some of them having each a peristyle of twenty-four columns, producing an inconceivably striking effect; and the landscape seemed to vie in richness with the buildings.

In a little time, Fort William, considered to be the finest fortress out of Europe, presented itself to our sight, and astonished us by the grandeur of its appearance as seen above the ramparts. The Government House, and the town of Calcutta, hitherto concealed, next opened suddenly to our view, and elicited a spontaneous burst of admiration from me.—"Ah," said I to Tassit, "how happy should I be to live in such a country as this! it is far, far more beautiful than England, dressed in all its charms." On the mention of England, there was something in the looks and manner of Tassit, which, though he was not a native, seemed to call up busy Memory's dearest objects.—"Nay, Naufragus," rejoined Tassit, "prefer not this gilded land to your native home: I know it better than you can know it: a land of luxury is not necessarily a land of happiness; the hardy inhabitant of a bleak cliff in England may be blessed with a thousand charms—a thousand tender links to social comfort, which the owner of yonder palace may in vain pine to possess, setting aside contentment and rude health, both of which inestimable treasures are in this land almost strangers to us. If," continued he, "it were not for my beloved Sarsnee, I should pine for the land in which I spent my boyish days so happily." Oh, Love! potent tyrant! nor country nor time can withstand thy sovereign sway: ay, youth—the world—and mammon too, bow down before thee, and must confess thee sovereign of all—the first and best of nature's boons. Would that "the course of love always did run smooth!" but if it did, the earth would be too blest, and mortals wish to live for ever!

The ebb tide causing us to come to an anchor for the night, my good captain took leave of us, after having left with Tassit the

necessary instructions respecting his duty, and having assured me "that he would take care I should be well paid for my services on board." The hearty squeeze of the hand which he gave me at parting, would, if any proof had been necessary, have convinced me of the sincerity of his professions of esteem and friendship. He then went on shore, taking Yadhoo with him; she eyed the surrounding wonders with an eager and impatient look, while a smile of satisfaction, arising probably from the prospect of a change of situation, lit up her countenance.—"There, Naufragus," said Tassit, pointing to our captain, who had got into a palanquin, and was by this time scarcely visible—"there goes as noble a fellow as ever stept; he carries within his bosom a heart of gold, a mine of inestimable wealth; he lives, Naufragus, not so much for himself as for others; whithersoever he goes, his fellow-creatures have cause to rejoice at his presence. At this moment his heart is overflowing with the happy thought of meeting a beloved wife, in whose smiles alone he seeks reward for the incessant toils and dangers attending his profession. May he enjoy all the blessings of this life, and eternal joys in the next, say I!"—"Yes, Tassit," said I, "and let us drink his health, and may he have a happy meeting with his family."—"With all my heart," rejoined Tassit. The pilot entered heart and soul into our feelings, and our worthy captain's health was drank with enthusiasm.

Tassit now proposed half an hour's recreation on shore, to which I joyfully acceded, being anxious to tread the land of Bengal. Scarcely had I time to look about me, on our landing, before my attention was arrested by a female form, of the middle stature, who walked by us with an air of elegance and dignity which surprised me. She was withal exceedingly lovely, and possessed, I thought, the finest form I had ever seen, set off to great advantage by her native dress, a fold of fine calico thrown loosely round her, yet gently compressing her waist, so as to display her shape to the utmost possible advantage; one end of the calico was fastened with a pin to her jet-black hair; her ears were ornamented with large ear-rings, and a profusion of trinkets; her fingers covered with rings, and her wrists with bangles; while her feet, and finely proportioned ancles, were left bare. The intensity of my gaze so far attracted her notice, that to my delight she

she smiled, but disappeared almost at the same instant. With ecstacy I turned to Tassit.—"Ah, my dear friend, did you behold that angelic figure?—tell me, what was she?—a native princess—perhaps the heiress of this princely mansion? I am sure she must be a being of some superior order."—"Naufragus," interrupted Tassit, "you are young—have not yet entered the third age, that age which a poet of your country pronounces to be as baneful to youth as sunken rocks to mariners: no, Naufragus, she is no princess—nor is she the heiress of yonder palace—no, nor a being of a superior order, as you vainly imagine; but, start not, she is neither more nor less than a *metrannee**."

In spite of my friend's philosophic advice, I could not, as we walked on the grass plat, before so stately a mansion, divest my mind of the idea of one whom I had considered so worthy to inhabit it. The time and place—surrounding objects—and, above all, the intoxicating fragrance of the gentle zephyrs, wafted from the Company's gardens opposite, aroused in me feelings which till then had lain almost dormant. I felt, as I imagine Adam must have felt in Paradise before Eve's creation, happy, but imperfectly so; there was still a vacuum, a something necessary to perfect bliss.

At daylight the next morning we again weighed anchor; at eight o'clock we brought up off Calcutta, and moored our brig close in shore, when the pilot took leave of us, with hearty demonstrations of friendship. Scarcely had he left us, before a tall and handsome copper-coloured youth, habited in white, and with a countenance as sedate as that of age, came on board, and was recognized by Tassit with a smile of delight. He was a domestic of his faithful Sarsnee, who brought beneath his vest a large plum-cake, two bottles of wine, and a kind invitation to come on shore. Tassit overwhelmed him with questions; and Moodoosooden Chetarjee felt equally delighted to see his old friend Tassit safe and sound. It was agreed that we should both go on shore the following day. I slept but little that night, both because my imagination was busy with the expected novelties of the morrow, and because mosquitoes in swarms incessantly hummed about my eyes, nose, and ears. The annoyance to those sensitive organs I can compare

* A female domestic employed to sweep the house. They are usually of the lowest cast, denominated "pariahs."

compare to nothing better than to their being tickled with fine feathers. The bite of the mosquito is not dissimilar to that of a gnat, but it is attended with considerably greater inflammation, and leaves behind a very uneasy sensation for some time after. Moodoosooden Chetarjee was sent the next day to procure me mosquito curtains, made of gauze, by which alone I was afterwards able to repel these indefatigable tormentors.

At length the time arrived for me to go on shore.—" Naufragus," said Tassit, " different countries have different customs; in England we walk—here we ride in palanquins;" and indeed the moment we touched the shore, we were puzzled how to choose among so many: Tassit, however, very coolly stretched himself at his full length in the one nearest to him, and I followed his example, Moodoosooden Chetarjee running by our side.

If I was pleased at the external appearance of the city, as seen from the river, how much was my expectation surpassed on beholding its interior! The superb buildings, the bustle of industry, the creaking of hackeries, or carts drawn by bullocks, the jostling of innumerable palanquins, the jabbering of the Bengallees and palanquin-bearers, the novelty of their dress (nothing but a fold of white calico thrown loosely over the body, and on the head a turban)—altogether composed a scene which so enchanted my imagination, that I could hardly divest myself of the idea that I was in fairy land; but my reverie was not long undisturbed, its charm being dissolved by a constant attendance at the side of my palanquin of importunate venders of books, sandal-wood boxes, bows and arrows, fans made of peacocks' feathers, and oriental curiosities.

We alighted at the house of Tassit's friend, a Mr. Wetzler, who received him with open arms, and welcomed me most cordially, as his friend.—" But where, where is my Sarsnee?" said Tassit. A pair of folding-doors then flew open, and a very lovely brunette appeared, and threw her arms very affectionately round Tassit's neck. She was a sister of Mr. Wetzler's, and I heartily congratulated my friend on the prospect he had of possessing such a treasure. I wish I could gratify my readers by setting off Tassit's person and features to advantage; but in this respect he was inferior to the charming woman whom he had chosen for his wife. His good sense, however, and the excellence of

of his heart, made him entirely worthy of her, and she loved him with an ardour seldom equalled.

As soon as the two lovers had exchanged caresses, and mutual congratulations began to give way to sober conversation, we sat down to a table richly spread with eastern and European delicacies, currees, hams, turkeys, and mellow East India Madeira. These are things well calculated to promote cheerfulness and good humour; but we did not require any stimulus.

My attention was almost wholly engrossed with the contemplation of the princely room we were dining in; it was open on every side, and had a large verandah, and extensive casements, shaded by venetians; the floor was of marble, the walls were decorated with glass wall-shades, chandeliers, and pictures; a punkah*, suspended from the ceiling, fanned us overhead, while a native at each corner of the table moved to and fro a large hand punkah, made of the leaves of the toddy tree, the end of which was fixed in a wooden socket, and the hookah emitted odoriferous spicy gales; crowds of Bengallee servants were in attendance. So enchanted were my senses, that I could not help observing to Tassit, that, much as I had heard of eastern luxury, the reality surpassed even the imagination.—"Yes, Naufragus," resumed Tassit, "the luxury is certainly great, but it soon cloys; and then, my friend, the mind has not, as in England, any means of renovating its exhausted powers; the very climate tends but to smother energy, and lull the soul into a state of indolence and languor; and all the luxury which captivates your young imagination, affords not that substantial happiness, which, in your free and happy country, is enjoyed by a rustic at his homely board."—"Alas, then," I exclaimed, "how truly deceptive are appearances!"

We sat up till a late hour; and at five the next morning Tassit appeared by my bed-side, telling me to "arouse, and conform to the customs of the east." I arose, and we then mounted horses provided for us, and galloped off towards the course, where the European inhabitants, and many of the British fair, were

 enjoying

* A board, about twelve feet in length, three in width, and one inch in thickness, richly gilded and papered. It is fastened by ropes to the roof or ceiling, and kept in motion by means of a line attached to its centre, and pulled by a person who sits in a corner of the room.

enjoying the freshness of the cool morning air. Soon, however, the sun displayed his effulgent rays, and the intensity of the heat drove us to seek shelter at home. There a shower-bath awaited us; and having dressed, we sat down at eight, to a substantial breakfast of rice, fish, coffee, tea, cold ham, fruit, and the hookah. "Now, Naufragus," said Tassit, "you shall see the renowned city of Calcutta." Stretched at full length in our palanquins, we were carried along at the rate of six or seven miles an hour; but the drudgery of the poor blacks who bore me under a burning sun with such rapidity, greatly diminished the pleasure of the conveyance. Tassit pointed out to me the government-house, built by the Marquis of Wellesley, at an amazing expence, and worthy of the princely city of Calcutta. It is situated on the western side of the esplanade, and is a most august and beautiful fabric, from whatever point it is viewed. Over the four arches, or gates, that lead to it, are placed sphinxes, with various figures and emblems, which produce a good effect. The king's and company's arms are emblazoned over the western and eastern gates. The black hole, where so many of my unfortunate countrymen died, victims to Indian tyranny, was then shewn me; and a torrent of ideas rushed to my memory, as I surveyed the very spot where the agony of the dying had once shrieked in vain for succour. On the fatal spot is erected a monument, which is intended at once to hold up to execration the memory of Surajah-ud-Dowlah, and to commemorate the sufferings and fortitude of his victims. It is a pyramid, truncated at the top, and standing upon a square pedestal, having a design in sculpture on each of its sides, and an inscription in the English and Indian languages. It is surrounded with an iron railing, and exhibits a mournful appearance, not unsuitable to the event which it is intended to commemorate. Tank-square, the range of Writers'-buildings, St. John's cathedral, and the Scotch church, with numerous other buildings, both public and private, on a scale of gigantic magnificence, each in its turn, claimed my attention.

"Now, Naufragus," said my conductor, "I will shew you a sight, the relation of which would scarcely be believed in your happy country." We joined a dense mass of natives, and to my astonishment I beheld men suspended, thirty or thirty-five feet from the ground, at the end of poles, to which they were

hooked

hooked through the muscles of the back, and whirling round and round in the air, with incredible swiftness. It was the Hindoo festival of the "*Doorga Poorga*," and the bigoted victims of mistaken zeal seemed not only to bear their tortures with fortitude, but to hail them with exultation. The victim, during the period of his suspension, which is about two or three minutes, is employed in casting flowers, and copper or silver coin, to the applauding multitude beneath him; he is then let down, and dismissed in triumph. This species of self-infliction is generally practised in honour of the goddess *Mari-ama*, whose rites are among the most wicked and sanguinary of those which are observed in India. I turned aside with disgust, not unmixed with pity, at the infatuation of man, who could thus transform a land, replenished by the bountiful Creator with every necessary, and even every luxury of life, and that almost under a remission of the sentence—"By the sweat of thy brow," into a seat of deplorable superstition and bigotry.

Scarcely had our palanquins made way through the crowd which hemmed us in on all sides, before another spectacle intercepted our progress to the garden-house of our good captain, where we intended to spend the evening. This new object of attraction, however, was more gratifying to our feelings than the first; it was the marriage festival of two young natives of rank, mere infants, accompanied with all the pomp which distinguishes the marriage ceremony in the east. A long procession preceded the infant bride and bridegroom; the individuals composing it carrying flowers and salvers of silver, gold, frankincense, myrrh, and sweetmeats, to be presented as gifts to the poor as well as the rich; and when the young bride and bridegroom, gorgeously arrayed, appeared, both in one palanquin, literally covered with gold, diamonds, and other precious stones, the noise from the cymbals and "tum-tums*" was deafening. The bride was a fine child, of a fair complexion, about five or six years of age; but I could not get a distinct view of the bridegroom. The marriage† cost no less than five lacs of rupees, (nearly sixty-three thousand pounds). What particularly struck my attention was the imposing beauty of a white Arab horse in the procession; it was gorgeously

* A kind of kettle-drums.

† For a more minute description of the marriage ceremony of the Hindoos, vide Index—"*Marriage*."

gorgeously caparisoned in the eastern style, and ridden by a very handsome Hindoo. The haughty and measured pace of the noble animal, and its gaudy trappings, formed a striking contrast with the wild and turbulent scene around us.

It was evening when we were set down at the steps of a neat garden house, in Intally *; our friend gave us a cordial welcome, and introduced us to his wife, an exceedingly fair Creole lady. She was dressed in fine white muslin; her beautiful jet black tresses hung negligently down a well-proportioned neck, and a turban tastily formed, set off her fine expressive features to great advantage. She was busied in the duties of hospitality towards a party of her husband's friends, and received us with a degree of graceful dignity and ease, which at once charmed us and impressed us with respect. We could see by her eyes, the happiness which she felt in having her husband once more by her side; and he seemed in an Elysium of joy, and infused a portion of it into us all.

In the midst of our enjoyment, a slender youthful female, habited with studied grace in the Malay style, entered the room, and handed round, on a massy silver salver, sweetmeats and wine. The captain and Tassit fixed their eyes steadfastly on me, but totally unconscious of their meaning, I turned to gaze on the attractive beauty of the girl; when, on her near approach, the familiar features of *Yadhoo* presented themselves to my view, her person set off by the advantage of dress, and by the arts of civilised life; my surprise and delight may be well conceived. She smiled with great sensibility, if I may say so, and I could see a tear, which she in vain endeavoured to suppress, steal down her youthful cheek. Could I but have read the train of thoughts then passing in her soul, as she surveyed the countenance which first regarded her with pity, when cruelly borne from the tender bosom of her parents, and her native land, to be exiled from them for ever, I, too, might have dropt a tear in tribute to the sacred sorrows of poor Yadhoo! I rejoiced, however, to see Mrs. Lambert take great pains to restore happiness to her young heart; she could not have had a better, or a more humane mistress; and there may be some, who think her new condition must have been more desirable, in every point of view, than that in which she lived in her native land, surrounded

* In the suburbs of the town of Calcutta.

rounded by the vices which are the necessary concomitants of ignorance, indolence, and superstition; but were I Yadhoo, and had the power to choose, I would gratefully do so, by remaining in the bosom of my family, and in the land of my birth. Farewell, poor Yadhoo! I commend you to the care and protection of Him who is a father of the fatherless, the friend of the friendless and oppressed, and whose power is as his compassion, boundless.

I left the garden-house of my friend, with feelings very different from those with which I entered it. In the course of the evening he beckoned me aside, and conducting me into his garden, addressed me in nearly the following words.—"You cannot but have observed, Naufragus, that I have had your interest sincerely at heart, from the moment when I first saw you, to the present time: it affords me pleasure to say, you have proved yourself in every way deserving of my friendship. I therefore have not, since I received the unexpected intelligence (brought me only yesterday) of my owner's death, and that my brig must, in consequence, be sold, been unmindful of your future welfare. I am destined, my young friend, to lie by, on shore, for a few months, as well from prudential reasons as from inclination; but that would be too long a time for you to be idle. I have," added he, after a pause, "been thinking, with as much pains and anxiety as if you were my own son, what is best for you to do: you have an uncle in England, owner of an East Indiaman, have you not?"—"I have, but——"—"I understand you," said he, interrupting me; "your leaving the ship makes you fearful of his displeasure; but fear not, my dear lad; no doubt he has the feeling and generosity to forget and forgive; you are still a boy. At all events, try him, and should you fail, return to Calcutta, and you shall never want a friend. I have lived long, my boy, and know the world too well, not to advise you to cultivate your uncle's friendship, by every possible means, in preference to that of any other person: his interest will insure you success in the world; but without it, you will have to struggle with almost insurmountable difficulties, and perhaps never arrive at any degree of independence as long as you live."

I was sensibly affected at the earnestness of his manner, and

 grateful

grateful for the warm interest which he took in my behalf: I told him so, and assured him of my willingness to abide by his advice: he added—"I have advised you as a father; if you wish to return to Europe, the means are in your power; I have ready for you a purser's birth on board of an Indiaman; or, if more acceptable, that of second mate of a country ship, bound for China, shall be secured for you—take your choice." I thanked him, and decided by adopting his advice, although I confessed I entertained but very feeble hopes of any good resulting from it. "I highly approve your judicious choice," he replied; "its success or failure, time and events alone will shew. To-morrow then I will introduce you to the captain, and pay you your wages, which amount to forty-five pounds. I hope yet to live to see you, Naufragus, captain of an Indiaman." I shook my head, but expressed my hope that he would live many years, and enjoy them; and he, in a cheering tone, advised me not to despair, but to do my best, hope for the best, and leave the rest to a kind Providence. We then returned to the company.

Tassit, who, in the course of the evening, was made acquainted with the drift of our discourse, approached me as soon as the company broke up—"Well, Naufragus," said he, "you are going to leave us, I hear?"—"Yes," I replied, with a sigh, "to meet the frowns of an offended uncle, while you, happy in the smiles and caresses of your bride, will be unconscious of the agonizing feelings of my heart!" He took my hand, and pressing it, told me to cheer up—"For," said he, "this world is a sea of woes, in which, like it, the mind of man is scarcely for a moment calm, except when sleep relieves him: short, however, is this respite; the dawn of day brings with it afresh the task of this world's pilgrimage, with all its woes, cares, turbulence, and pain; and, for aught we know, you, when under your uncle's frown, may be as little to be pitied, as myself to be envied in the embraces of my bride; for the lot of man in this life is, in my opinion, pretty nearly equal throughout with respect to happiness."

I felt thankful to him for the object he had in view, in reasoning thus, but was too affected to reply; he observed my embarrassment, and we parted for the night with a silent wring of the hand,

hand, which conveyed to the heart a melancholy but sincere token of friendship on both sides.

In the morning, Captain Lambert and Tassit accompanied me to the residence of my new commander. On our way, Lambert observed that I had only two days to fit myself out, for that the ship was already on her passage down the river to Saugor.—"Had we time," added Tassit, "I would have taken you with me to see a young and blooming widow voluntarily sacrifice herself on the funeral pile of her deceased husband; and many other equally barbarous customs of this people, which would be to you objects of great interest." We joined in the hope, however, that I should soon return to India, and under more auspicious circumstances.

We were soon in the presence of my new commander: he was a short thin man, with a sallow complexion, and an austere brow; which, however, relaxed on his seeing the honest visage of good Captain Lambert; then the great man was so *very* polite, that I could hardly persuade myself it was the person to whom I had just been introduced; but I had already seen enough of the world to know how necessary it is to distrust appearances: it was at length agreed that I should be his purser, keep his books, and perform whatever else might be required of me as an amanuensis; and that in return for these services, I should mess at his table, and have the convenience of a cabin. We then parted, with an understanding that I was to proceed down the river to join the ship on the following day; and the few remaining hours which were left at my disposal were employed in preparations for my departure. The next day Lambert and Tassit accompanied me to the boat; our parting was marked on both sides with every demonstration of sincere good-will and true friendship; and without thinking of this scene, never can I read Shakspeare's picturesque description of the parting of Antonio and his friend:—

> "———— His eye being big with tears,
> Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
> And, with affection wondrous sensible,
> He wrung Bassanio's hand, and so they parted."

On my reaching the ship, I was received by the first officer, and conducted to my cabin. On the following day the captain

 joined

joined us, and we weighed anchor, and bade farewell to the shores of Bengal. The character of my new commander was naturally, and almost necessarily, the first object of my attention. How different from that of my friend Lambert! The one was open, hospitable, generous, and friendly; the other proud, morose, passionate, and deceitful. But, as I went on board determined to endeavour to please, I had a satisfaction which few on board experienced—that of not *displeasing*. My chief effort to keep the great man in good humour with me, consisted in a never-ceasing application to his private account books and papers; but, what was more an object of particularity with him, was the manner of my performing the duties of the table, where I sat at the head of no less than thirty persons, including passengers, ladies as well as gentlemen, Dutch prisoners of war, the first and second officers, and the doctor. These duties I found not easy, under an equinoctial sun, amid calls for fresh supply, and with no better instrument than a blunt carving-knife. Even under these circumstances, the slightest symptom of petulance would not have received indulgence. Had I been older, I should have found my task easier; but I had seen scarcely fifteen summers, although I might have passed for twenty-two. This part of my duty, in general the most annoying, once in a storm, off the Cape of Good Hope, proved the source of serio-comical amusement. One day at dinner, in a lurch of the ship, so heavy that not a soul on board expected she would ever right again, the table (though lashed firmly to the deck), groaning with sea-pies, lobscous*, tureens, dishes and plates, suddenly gave way, throwing with a crash, the whole company towards me, who was seated to leeward. I had just time, and barely, to pop my head under the table, otherwise I should have suffered the pain either of half-strangulation, by the edge of the table catching my neck, or of being jammed against the ship's side, by the weight both of table and passengers.

I have never yet been a voyage without seeing something new and eminently grand in the works either of nature or of art. Of the objects worthy of attention in this voyage, three made a lasting impression on my mind; the first was, the tremendous sea rolling off the Cape of Good Hope, in one of the most direful storms perhaps ever known. The sea off the Cape is proverbial for

* A kind of Irish stew, held in great estimation by sailors.

for the terrific height to which it runs; even to mariners it proves appalling, and to many voyagers fatal; in might, awful grandeur, and in fury, it surpasses all the seas on the face of the globe. The storm came on with a gentle zephyr off the land, which increased to a horrid roar of whirlwind, accompanied with continual flashes of lightning, vivid balls of fire darting around the vessel, and bursts of tremendous thunder: it continued during a whole week. The nights were horrible; the hoarse cry of the sailors' voices could scarcely be heard amidst the deafening roar of the foaming billow, and the howling of the wind in terrifically violent intermitting gusts through the rigging. The sea, as seen by the flashes of lightning, appeared eager to swallow us up in destruction. At the dawn of day, what a subject for a poet! what a field for a masterly painter! But no artist, however masterly, could do justice to a scene so awful; nor pencil, nor language, convey to the mind any the remotest idea of its mighty grandeur. Truly does the Psalmist say—"They that go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters; these men see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." The sea, terrific and dark as the clouds which covered it, rolled slowly onward, as if sure of destroying its victim; and when the threatening billow reached us, destruction seemed inevitable. But no! the bark sinks not—she is hurled up to the heavens on its bosom, and the spectator sees beneath him a frightful and yawning gulf, into which he again sinks to be again borne upward!

This was the grandeur of nature. The second was the grandeur of art, as exhibited in His Majesty's frigate the Loire, Captain Brown, under whose convoy we were sailing. In the Atlantic Ocean, one morning early, the Loire sailed close alongside of us. The breeze was scarcely strong enough to ripple the waters, and emitted a refreshing fragrance; the frigate, as if conscious of her superiority and imposing beauty, as she glided through her native element, sailed majestically side by side with us, a martial band on board her striking up in the best style: not one of us but felt a glow of exultation on beholding so fair a sample of England's pride; not one but felt the love of country strong within him. But not a whisper could be heard—a death-like stillness, interrupted only by the music, and the sighing of the

the breeze, reigned around, while the minds and eyes of all were busily employed on the unrivalled scene before them. Suddenly a signal from another ship of the fleet, for a *strange sail*, produced an instantaneous change of scene; swift as thought the Loire was crowded "low and aloft" with sail; in an instant she bore away from us, and in less than an hour was a mere speck on the horizon, in hot pursuit of the stranger. By one she reappeared, overtook us, fired a gun to leeward, and made signal— "WAR WITH AMERICA!"

The third, was the glorious spectacle of the setting sun. For ten evenings together, during a period of from twenty to thirty minutes after the fiery orb had withdrawn, the horizon presented such a rich variety of fantastic forms, and matchless colours, of azure gold, and spangles, vying, as it were, to surpass each other in delicacy and splendour—the whole too reflected upon the rippling ocean in the west—as to produce an effect beyond description magnificent and delightful, and which inspired all of us with admiration.—"How grand!" all exclaimed; "and," thought I, "how worthy of the great Creator, who has given to the objects of nature the most agreeable forms and accessories, as well as the most important uses!"

At the end of a few weeks I once more trod the land of my nativity: we arrived in the Downs towards evening, got under weigh early on the next morning, and, with the assistance of a good sea-breeze, reached Gravesend on the evening of the same day. Fully sensible of the importance of conciliating my uncle's esteem, and under considerable anxiety, I bade adieu to all on board, and reached his counting-house, in London, at ten on the following morning. I was there informed that he was at his country seat, and would not return to town until the morrow. I therefore went to my father's, who had heard that I had left my ship, but as to what became of me he had no means of forming an idea.

It was about five in the evening of a delightful May-day, when I reached the lane which led down to his farm:

"———What singular emotions fill
 Their bosoms who have been induced to roam!
With flattering doubts, if all be well or ill—
 With love for many, and with fears for some;
All feelings which o'erleap the years long lost,
And bring our hearts back to their starting post."

In

In a field at the end of the lane, a girl, nursing a little child, which afterwards proved to be my only sister, turned round to gaze on me; while I, dressed in a blue jacket, with nankeen trowsers, and carrying under my arm a bundle, containing four pieces of Bengal bandannoes (two intended for my uncle Barron, and two for my father), walked on without interruption. The well-known gate of the farm-yard opened at my touch—a solemn stillness reigned around, not interrupted even by faithful Bob, the house-dog, whose large head, resting on his fore paws, in his kennel, seemed to recognize me as his master's friend. I lifted the door-latch, and without ceremony walked into the parlour, where sat my father and mother at tea. My father, who did not know me, in consequence of the alteration which two years had made in my appearance, rose to inquire my business; but my mother, pale and in a trembling voice, exclaimed—"It is he!—it is my son!" and hurrying across the room, I was in a moment locked in those arms which I then wished I had never left.

Questions and answers followed each other so fast, it was a long time before I could collect any thing connected with my uncle's feelings towards me; at last I understood that my inveterate enemy, the second officer, had traduced my character by every possible mode, had misrepresented facts, and given to the follies or sallies of youth, the colour of determined viciousness.—"In short," said my father, "he has succeeded in prejudicing your uncle so much against you, that he is determined never to see you more; indeed," he continued, with one hand placed in his bosom, and a sigh which he tried in vain to suppress, "your uncle and myself have unfortunately had a few misunderstandings of late; and I fear we shall soon be obliged to quit the farm: but for you I feel more than for myself; should he discard you, you will be destitute—I can give you nothing but my blessing; you must therefore go to him, Naufragus, to-morrow; give him the bandannoes, since you bought them for him, and ask his forgiveness for the past; in the mean time, we will not let imaginary ills cloud the happiness of our present meeting. Come, Kate," speaking to my mother, "let's have a bowl of punch; and Naufragus shall relate all that has happened to him." Then turning to me —"As for your mother, she has not had a dry eye since she heard that your ship had come home without you; and many an

hour

hour of anxiety have I had, I assure you." In spite of fate, mirth and hilarity crowned our board, for that evening, and not a single sigh could find admittance within, although all was very far from being well without.

The next morning my father cheered up my spirits by every means in his power, and when, with the bandannoes under my arm, I bade him—"Good day," he said—"Now, Naufragus, you are going to seek forgiveness for a fault; bear that in mind, and, if possible, don't come away without it: God bless you! and prosper your undertaking."

At eleven o'clock I reached my uncle's counting-house, and beheld him standing at the further end of it, with his back to the fire; as soon as he recognized me, which he did almost as soon as I entered it, he turned instantly aside, and left the office, first commanding me, in a severe tone, to—"*Begone!* and never presume to approach his presence more." Go I did—at heart punished more by the severity of his manner, than by the abandonment itself, serious as I knew it would prove to me in its consequences. In vain did I subsequently endeavour to soften his resentment, by laying before him, in writing, the true state of things; he was implacable—my letters were burned; and from that period to this I have never known the benefit even of his good *word*, much less of his assistance.

As for the bandannoes, I gave them to my father, conjuring him not to be low-spirited, and saying, that I should perhaps do better in the Indies, with the strangers' fostering aid, than at home, under the cold hand of relations. I added—"Fret not for me, my dear father: the will of Providence is irrevocable, and for the few days we have to live, we must conform to it. All may yet be for our good, however cruelly appearances may frown upon us."

In consequence of the excessive severity of punishment with which parents, or natural protectors, visit the errors of youth, how many are lost to their families for ever; their fair prospects blighted, and those promising talents nipped in the bud, which might otherwise have proved honourable to themselves, and beneficial alike to their country and to mankind! And here I beg the reader's indulgence, while I digress a little from my narrative, in order to offer a few considerations on the hardship of my individual

vidual case. It is not for me to sit in judgment on my own conduct; but even granting I committed faults deserving of punishment, still they were the faults of a young, inexperienced boy, only fourteen years old. It will, I think, be admitted that a more cruel punishment, one more calculated to condemn me, for life, to poverty, and to an abject dependence on strangers for my bread, could not have been inflicted; and I leave the reader to judge whether my punishment was proportionate to my offence. Destitute, friendless, exposed to all the temptations of a seductive metropolis like London, and surrounded (as I afterwards was) by chilling poverty and despair, had I sought refuge in the grave, or in the haunts of infamy and vice—had I even breathed my last on a scaffold, it would have been no more than could naturally have been expected. That this has not been the case, I have certainly not to thank my uncle Barron. It may perhaps be thought that he was not *bound* to do any thing at all for me; that indeed there are few uncles who would have done so much; and that he was perfectly at liberty to withdraw his protection without subjecting himself to the imputation of injustice; but when it is considered, that he had known the family in happier days, when they rode in their carriages, and were respected for their virtues as well as for their riches; that the exercise of his patronage was, from the almost unlimited extent of his interest, as well as of his purse, no serious object to him; and that he had, moreover, received, when he most needed it, a dowry of five thousand pounds with his wife, the case will appear, in the view of any unprejudiced person, widely different.

In justice, however, to one who has treated me so cruelly, I cannot suppress the fact, that to almost every other branch of the family, he has proved himself a benefactor, and especially to two of my junior brothers, whom he has sent to India as cadets; so that, however little I may personally have to thank him for, I can never harbour in my breast a less favourable feeling towards him than a sincere desire for his future welfare.

My first consideration was, how to procure a licence to proceed again to India. I had an aunt, who had frequently seen, at the table of her mother, that honourable gentleman, Mr. Inglis, a director of the Honourable East India Company; to him she applied for "Free Mariners' Indentures" for me, and obtained them: but

I had

I had still to overcome a difficulty before I received them; and that arose from the circumstance of my having deserted my ship: the highly favourable and flattering testimony, however, borne by the captain, in a written certificate, as to my general conduct, and to the rectitude of my moral character, overcame this difficulty: and after taking a farewell of my parents, I sailed for India, but under the melancholy conviction that a storm, threatening destruction to my family and their little all, was ready to burst over their heads; and without having any substantial grounds to hope that I should ever again see either them, or my native land. To those who have never seen their "native land receding through the growing waters," on taking a long, and perhaps eternal farewell of it, I cannot but recommend the perusal of the following lines:—

"I can't but say it is an awkward sight,
To see one's native land receding through
The growing waters; it unmans one quite,
Especially when life is rather new:
I recollect Great Britain's coasts look white,
But almost every other country's blue;
When gazing on them, mystified by distance,
We enter on our nautical existence."

I was now bound to the island of Ceylon, which was well known to the ancients, and is supposed to be the Taprobana of Ptolemy. It is famous for its rich pearl fishery *—the abundance of its gems and precious stones—its rich beds of cassia, and cinnamon trees, and for the grandeur, beauty, and variety of nature displayed in its scenery; which very possibly may have given rise to the tradition so prevalent to this day among the natives, that it is the spot where the Garden of Eden originally stood. The narrow channel that separates it from the peninsula, bears the name of "Adam's Bridge;" and on the summit of a mountain, called "Adam's Peak," they even pretend to shew the print of Adam's foot.

On

* The pearl fishery begins on the north-west shore, about the middle of February, and continues about two months. The village of Condatchy is then crowded with visitors of different countries, colours, casts, and occupations, who erect tents and huts, bazars and shops; while the sea presents the enlivening scene of boats hastening to the banks, or returning with the expected riches. The divers are chiefly Christians or Musulmauns, who descend five or ten fathoms, and remain under water about two minutes, each bringing up an hundred oysters or more in a net. The yellow, or gold-coloured pearl, is most esteemed by the natives, but that of a dull grey, or blackish hue, is most valuable.

On our arrival at Columbo *, the chief town of the English possessions on the island, we found a country ship †, commanded by a Captain Ross, detained in port for want of an officer. A more fortunate opportunity could not possibly have presented itself: my proffered services were accepted with avidity, on a salary of eighty rupees, or ten pounds a month, with the use of the captain's table; and I left the Indiaman with the good wishes of the captain, officers, and all the crew. This allowance (as my mere personal expences were but trifling) soon put me in a condition to save a little: our vessel was a coasting trader of Malabar, and from constant communication with the natives of Goa, Cannanore, Mangalore, Tillichery, Cochin, Quilon, and Anjengo, I at length ventured to turn my little savings to some account, by trading, at first in a small way, buying on commission, and selling at a profit of frequently more than seventy-five or one hundred per cent. This encouragement induced me to enlarge my system of traffic; and as we made quick trips to Bombay, and from port to port, I found myself, to my infinite joy, at the end of eighteen months, possessed of nearly five thousand six hundred rupees (seven hundred pounds). My captain was equally successful on a larger scale. The vessel was principally his own; but being too small for the increasing commerce on the coast, he resolved to sell her, build a large one at Cochin, and proceed from Ceylon to the Mauritius with a profitable cargo of buffaloes and cocoa-nut oil. As I loved my captain as a brother, I had to lament that his quitting India for the Mauritius would compel me, in justice to my own interests, to leave him; but it gave me pleasure to be able to afford him a proof of my regard, by a ready compliance with his wish, that I would not do so until the day of his departure from Ceylon.

While my captain's ship was building, I availed myself of the short time, then at my disposal, to visit a civilian at Calicut, whose family was intimate with my uncle, the captain, and who had been very attentive to me at his table in Bombay. European society, at the British settlements on the Malabar coast, is

so

* Columbo is a handsome town, and well fortified; the governor's house, which consists but of one floor, is elegant. The climate is less sultry than that of Hindostan, being exposed on all sides to sea-breezes.

† A vessel commanded by a European, but manned by natives, and trading in the Indian Seas. Country vessels, of a large size, make a voyage to England occasionally.

so monotonous, that a description of the state of it at one, may serve for a description of its state in the rest.

The English at Calicut reside in bungalows *, of a capacious size, and well built: society here more resembles the unanimity of a family, than any thing else, the only residents being the civil, military, and naval officers of the Company; and as they are all, in point of respectability, upon an equal footing, few or no discords arise among them. On my reaching Calicut, I found that my friend was on a visit at Bombay, and Mr. Price, then magistrate there, invited me to partake of the hospitalities of his house and table, until my friend's return. In the daytime, the members of our little society usually repaired to the habitation of Mr. W****n, at present secretary to the Bombay government. In one room a few English ladies would charm the votaries of music with their performance on the harp and piano, the gentlemen accompanying them on the flute, or bass viol; while in an adjoining apartment, billiards were the amusement: in another room were newspapers and other periodical works, recently brought from Europe, with pamphlets, &c. for the literati; and wide verandahs afforded a cheerful promenade. After all, the best treat was perhaps the rich vein of Mr. W****n's humour; he possesses, besides those peculiar powers which are essential to the entertainment of a large company, a resplendent genius and a ready wit, and his guests are secure of a frank, open-hearted, generous welcome. In the evenings, I was favoured with the loan of a fine Arabian horse; and a ball frequently concluded the day's entertainment. Thus agreeably employed, I was sorry when a letter from my captain invited me to attend the launch of his ship, which was to take place immediately; and especially sorry, as my friend had not returned from Bombay. Of Mr. W****n I took an affectionate leave, as also of the ladies and gentlemen of the settlement, but particularly of Mr. Price, little thinking how soon he would be lost to his friends: a fortnight after I left him, a snake†, which had crept into his bed, bit him, and he survived but a few hours. I em-

* A bungalow is a building peculiar to India. It contains four or six spacious rooms, all on one floor, with back and front verandahs: the roof is thatched; and its external appearance is not unlike that of a large barn in England. It is built of brick, or "pucka," as the native term is—sometimes of bamboos and matting alone; and its price is about fifteen hundred rupees.

† These noxious reptiles throughout India prove a constant source of terror and annoyance to the inhabitants, and their bite frequently produces fatal consequences. For further information on this subject, vide Index—"*Serpents.*"

I embarked in a large canoe, which, in three days and nights, bore me in safety to Cochin, where my captain welcomed me with open arms.

Cochin belongs to the Dutch; it stands on the northern point of a long tongue of land, nearly insulated, and bounded on the east by a creek of the sea, which receives several streams. The entrance to its harbour is obstructed by a dangerous bar. It was formerly a place of considerable eminence, but of late years has fallen to decay. Little is done there at present, except in ship-building, to which purpose it is admirably adapted, from the facility which it affords of procuring an abundant supply of good Malabar teak timber, masts, and spars; the copper sheets, nails, and iron-ware, are imported from Bombay.

What most attracts the notice of a stranger is, the enormous size of the legs of the natives, from which circumstance, legs of a disproportionate size are, in India, called "Cochin legs:" hundreds of poor wretches are seen here with legs swollen to so enormous a size, as more to resemble those of an elephant, than any thing human. The disease of which they are indicative, and which is attributed, but improperly, to the impurity of the water, has never been known to affect Europeans.

Our vessel was launched with due eclat, and named the Zephyr. We were honoured with the presence of the British Resident, Mr. Money, who, with the other civilians, the British officers, and the "Beauty" of the settlement, afterwards partook of a cold collation with us. The ladies of Cochin are fair and fascinating; some of them extremely handsome; and most of them play the guitar with great taste and pathos; they are fond of the English; and on the occasion of a wedding, the settlement is enlivened by dancing and revelry for a week together,

At this period (1813) there was at Cochin a female maniac, remarkable for personal beauty and symmetry of form, who frequently contrived to elude the vigilance of her keepers, and fly into the woods, where she would disrobe herself, and roam about in a state of complete nudity. She was so wary as seldom to allow herself to be caught, and towards evening, might be seen returning to her haunts with the fleetness of a deer. Occasionally she would venture near the outskirts of the town, adorned fantastically with flowers. When asked who fed her, she

 would

would reply—"The snakes and lizards of the forest;" and, in general, her answers were incoherent and misplaced. She was kidnapped, at an early age, from her parents at Goa, and sold to slavery, which misfortune was supposed to have been the cause of her malady. Unfortunate maid! let us hope that an eternity of happiness awaits thee in a better world, to compensate thy wretchedness in this!

On our ship being rigged, and ready for sea, we set sail for Ceylon, and in a few days, came to an anchor in a small bay to the east of Point de Galle, called Beligaum, where we meant to harbour until the cargo of bullocks should be procured:—It was a

> "———wild and breaker-beaten coast,
> With cliffs above, and a broad sandy shore;
> Guarded by shoals and rocks, as by a host,
> With here and there a creek, whose aspect wore
> A better welcome to the tempest toss'd;
> And rarely ceas'd the haughty billows' roar,
> Save on the dead-long summer days, which make
> The outstretch'd ocean glitter like a lake."

On the summit of a mountain overlooking the bay, stood a vacant bungalow, of which, with the permission of the owner, who was at Galle, we took possession. An officer, who was to relieve me, having joined us, I here enjoyed, for three months, the pleasure of my esteemed captain's society, together with that of Captain Symes, a military officer, who was to take his passage to the Mauritius in the Zephyr. Every morning, on turning my waking eyes on the beams and rafters of our bungalow, I saw serpents, of a large size, creeping and winding over and about them. At first I was horror-struck at the sight; but after a time they had ceased to terrify me, and at length became even familiar to the eye; so that when I awoke, I used to look for them as objects of course, and learnt to distinguish my visitants one from another, both by the diversity of their speckles, black and green, and by their size; they twined round and round the rafters and beams, but I never knew one of them to fall upon or molest me. Here also, as at Prince of Wales' Island, the trees and bushes were illumined by swarms of fire-flies, which presented, on a dark night, the grandest sight imaginable. It was my custom to stroll with my friends through the paddy-fields in the interior, and admire the verdure of the country, and the majesty of the silent forest; and often

often has the black scorpion, two or three inches in length, turned towards us his deadly sting;—and the wild elephant, the buffalo, or sanguinary tiger, encroach on our path; and here the boa, and other enormous serpents, fatal alike to man and beast, might be seen coiled beneath the bushes, watching eagerly for their prey.

In the afternoon, after the table-cloth had been removed, it was my delight to stroll among the villages alone, and observe the manners and customs of the people. One evening, a Cingalese priest, as I passed his humble habitation, built of bamboos, and covered with mats, encouraged me, by signs, to enter it. I readily complied, and observed that every thing in the interior of the cot bore the marks of great simplicity and neatness. His wife and daughter, a pretty Indian girl apparently about fourteen, were busied on a piece of cotton twist; and in one corner of the room were two slave-girls spinning. While the old man was giving me a draught of cocoa-nut milk, I could not but reverence his silvery hairs, which, with his staff, and long patriarchal beard, gave him the appearance of a " man of God." Surrounding objects too disposed me to devotional feeling, and more than once I breathed a wish that, however different might be the tenets of his faith from mine *, we should both at last meet in the eternal mansions of rest. I took leave of him with every demonstration of respect, regretting that our ignorance of each other's language prevented our conversing.

Often have I watched the Indian, seated at the door of his hut —approached him—offered him money; he would receive it, but with a vacant stare, and without emotion—no *soul* seemed to animate him; he appeared wrapt in apathy, intent alone on the indulgence of indolence and ease. The women, on the contrary, are vivacious, and particularly well made; their walk is dignified and graceful, their hair is long and glossy, their eyes large, black, and sparkling, and their features handsome.

A few days previous to the Zephyr's departure, two circum-

* The religion of Ceylon is the ancient worship of Boodh, who is reported to have been born there about one thousand years before the birth of Christ. His image appears with short and crisped hair, because it is fabled that that effect was actually produced by a golden sword with which he cut it. The Cingalese are grossly superstitious, believing in sorcery, witches, &c. invoking supernatural agency, and using spells and enchantments.

stances occurred, which I relate for the purpose of exhibiting, by contrast, the blessings enjoyed by those who live in a country not subject to similar disasters.

About a mile from our bungalow was a small rivulet, over which the trunk of a tree had been placed for the convenience of foot-passengers; this rivulet had been crossed by our captain at four o'clock in the evening, and at half-past five the villagers were aroused by loud and piercing shrieks issuing from the spot: they quickly repaired to it, but too late—a tiger had seized a little girl, and had succeeded in escaping with her into the woods; her own brother, a boy about nine years of age, being an eye-witness of his sister's tragical end.

On another evening, loud voices were heard to proceed from the village, and torches seen moving about in great numbers; we repaired to the spot immediately, and found the cause of alarm to be a large serpent, which had been captured by the villagers in the act of seizing a young jackal, which the monster could neither swallow nor disgorge; writhing in agony (the jackal at the same time rending the air with cries), at last it fell under the swords of its captors. The serpent's body was of the thickness of that of an infant a few months old: its length seventeen feet. The jackal died immediately on being released from its jaws.

On the morning on which the Zephyr sailed, I repaired on board to assist in getting her under weigh, and it was not till the appearance of the shores in distance had warned me to return, that I bade my friends farewell, and made for the land in a canoe; a palanquin and bearers, previously engaged, were in readiness to convey me to Point de Galle. The journey was a delightful one; the country, in every direction, presented to view scenes of nature untamed by art, save here and there a few paddy-fields, and some straggling huts. Forest and glen—hill and dale—rivulet and torrent—the shady cocoa-tree, the palm, the talipot-tree, and stately tamarind—together with the gaudy plumage of the feathered tribe—form a combination well calculated to affect the heart, and to raise the mind to an enviable state of admiration and delight. My pleasure, however, was not unmixed with apprehension, that some unceremonious tiger, or boa, would pounce upon us, and in that case my chance of

of escape would have been but small; for in every situation of danger, such as I am supposing, the bearers invariably throw down their palanquin and take to their heels, leaving its inmate to shift for himself. It is remarkable, however, that in India a tiger will never carry off a European when he can get hold of a native.

No sooner had I arrived at Point de Galle, than I embarked for Calcutta, in a brig just on the eve of sailing. The captain was an enterprising young officer, who, while a mere infant, was conveyed from his native land (the island of Jersey), by his father, and had acquired the habits and appearance of an Asiatic; he spoke Cingalese, and several other oriental languages, with the fluency of a native. We sailed round the north-east side of Ceylon, occasionally standing close in shore, to the delight of all on board, and in four days came to an anchor at Trincomalee. Here we found the British garrison in high spirits, in consequence of Wellington's successes, and of the entrance of the allies into Paris, the intelligence of which had reached them but a day or two before. They were, however, suffering under the pestilential effects of the climate, which had shewn themselves in an alarming manner, and had become the immediate causes of frightful mortality among the British officers and men in garrison.

After a pleasant passage of six weeks, I once more trod the streets of Calcutta; but, alas! what changes may a few "little months" produce! and how frequently, on returning to a fixed abode, after a short absence, is this truth fatally impressed upon us! I found my esteemed friend and patron, Captain Lambert, numbered with the numberless dead; and Tassit had left Calcutta, with his lovely bride, and one boy, the fruit of their union, to superintend an indigo factory, at some station up the country, but where I could not learn. Thus was I deprived of two friends, who, a few months before, had proved themselves the props of my existence, and on whom rested the realisation of my future prospects. Let me, however, indulge the hope, that all endeared ties, connexions, and virtuous friendships, formed on earth, and on earth divided, may be renewed and matured "in another and a better world."

I was now comparatively rich, and rented a small house in

"Jaun's Bazar," at four gold mohurs* (£8) per month, and took Tassit's favourite sircar, *Moodoosooden Chetárjee,* into my service. For some time I was divided in opinion as to whether I should proceed to my old markets, Lingin and Minto, as an officer, and wait patiently until further successes in trade had increased my capital, or at once purchase a brig, and command her. I was at least a week in considering this matter, sometimes with my Jersey friend, Captain Thomson—sometimes alone, over a refreshing tumbler of "*Brandy pawny*†," but most frequently when enjoying the fragrant sweets of the hookah‡, to the vivifying charms of which I fancied myself indebted, if not for the *best* of my ideas, at least for the abundance of them. At length I decided on the purchase of a brig, and told Moodoosooden Chetarjee to look out for one, the price of which was not to exceed four thousand rupees§, or five hundred pounds.

Moodoosooden Chetarjee was, as I before said, a sedate-looking youth; his gait and manner had even an air of sanctity, much heightened by his dress, a garment of fine linen folded loosely over him, and hanging down to his sandaled feet, his turban being of rich muslin. On his entrance he would make his *salam* by raising his hands, in a graceful curve, to his forehead, touching it three times.—"Well, Moodoosooden," I would exclaim, "what news this morning?"—[With emphasis.]—"All the best news, my lord!"—"What is it, Moodoosooden?"—"Nothing, my

* Gold mohur, a gold coin, not always of the same value, but in general about fifteen or sixteen sicca rupees.

† Brandy and water.

‡ The cost of a hookah complete is at least two hundred rupees (£25). The tobacco is first cleaned, then cut up, and mashed with plantain, or other fruits, into a cake; this, scented with musk, otto of roses, or other perfumes, is so bewitching to the smell, as almost to tempt the palate. I have heard that girls in England sometimes nibble Windsor soap, and to them this delicious compound would be a treat. The hookah-stand, usually of cut glass, is nearly full of pure water, through which the tobacco is drawn; it then enters a snake, or tube, from twelve to fifteen feet long, the end of which, tipped with a mouth-piece, is honoured by being received into the "white man's" mouth, who, to sit with the required dignity, must stretch out his legs as far as he well can, over, and if possible, right across the table. The mouth-piece is about five inches in length. If belonging to a native of rank, or wealthy merchant, it is extremely costly, being of gold, set with diamonds and other precious stones. The price of a hookah of this kind, with the snake and its accompaniments on a corresponding scale of magnificence, is known often to exceed a lack of rupees (£12,500).

§ The rupee is of silver, and varies in value according to the part of India in which it is coined. Its general value is two shillings and sixpence.

my lord!" This odd reply at first gave disappointment to inspired hopes; and it was not until I got used to Moodoosooden's manner, that I could suppress the curiosity which his mode of answering was calculated to excite. In general, indeed, as may well be imagined, the natives puzzle Europeans, fresh from their native soil. Once, for instance, on a free trader's arrival off Diamond Harbour, from Europe, a baboo * having come on board, with his attendants, to make his salam to the commander, was addressed with—" Well, Ramcunny, [all flocking round him] what news in Calcutta?"—" Oh, bad, very bad news, my lord!"—" What's that? let's have it."—" Oh, *Colonel Forbis*, master, kill one crore † black, and plenty white man, every day," to the consternation of all.—" Indeed!" said the pilot; " that must have happened then, since I've come down." All were pretty well puzzled in endeavouring to ascertain who this desperate fellow—" *Colonel Forbis*," could be; he was at length discovered to be a personification of the *cholerá morbus*, which had just then made its appearance, and was raging with fatal violence.

On another occasion, an English gentleman, who was going on a visit for a few days to a friend at Hooghly, left his bungalow at Aleppe, in the charge of his sircar, with strict directions to write, should any thing happen. A day or two had scarcely elapsed ere a letter came from blackee, who probably wrote from the dictionary, indited verbatim as follows:—

" My dear friend—We all wait you: come this day—the shutters got quite abroad, and a nullity thereabouts; last night they had very great palpitation—Come directly. From your loving friend and servant, RAMCUNNY BUTTERJEA."

On the receipt of this important epistle, the gentleman repaired

* The baboos of Calcutta are a very useful class of persons; their business is to dispose of the investments of European traders, to make purchases for them in the bazar, and, in short, to provide all their necessaries. They indeed, by their superior skill in the art of over-reaching, levy a duty on their employer beyond what he expected to be called upon to pay; but if *they* cheat him, they take care that no one else shall. The baboos of the lower description (or sircars), with the view of getting into their power any young European, fresh from Europe, readily come forward with advances of cash; in which case they seldom fail to realize a handsome interest on their money, charging an enormous profit of seventy-five or a hundred per cent. on every article furnished.

† One hundred lacks of rupees.

paired to Aleppe, and found that the shutters of his bungalow had indeed had a "very great palpitation," for a hurricane had blown them completely off the hinges; and moreover, they had gone "quite abroad," or, in other words, were blown to the distance of twenty or thirty yards from the house. As for the "nullity thereabouts," he interpreted that to refer to the bare appearance of the walls.

One evening, Moodoosooden entered, with a bearer * behind him, carrying a superb brass-mounted mahogany writing-desk, and requested my acceptance of it. Having presented it, he said he had succeeded in selecting a brig just then for sale, which he thought would suit me.—"She was," he added, "registered at one hundred and twenty-five tons, Chittagong built; her price four thousand rupees (five hundred pounds), and was then lying in the river Hooghly. I have besides, my lord," resumed Moodoosooden, "engaged a rich freight for you for Madras, Pondicherry, and Ceylon, the produce of which," he added, "will more than defray the cost and outfit of the vessel and crew."—"Well, Moodoosooden, this is good news; to-morrow morning I will go with you to see the vessel."—"But that," Moodoosooden rejoined, "is not all; I have secured you a good syrang † and tyndal ‡——" "Stay, Moodoosooden," I replied; "first, let us purchase the vessel, then secure the crew." To the propriety of this Moodoosooden assented, observing—"He was sure I should be a very rich man, for my fingers were unusually long."

Having engaged an experienced surveyor to accompany me, we repaired together on board the brig, and Moodoosooden joined us at gun-fire || the following morning. The vessel, on examination, being found well calculated, in every respect, for an Eastern trader, an attorney was engaged to inspect the title-deeds, and draw the deed of sale. Having paid the purchase-money, I engaged my freight, and commenced receiving cargo the same week, with all the energy and spirit which the novelty of the undertaking could inspire me with. Night and day all on board was a scene of bustle and activity; we were taking in ballast, laying mats round the sides, and at the bottom of the hold; receiving rice, wheat, and bale goods, and stowing them away.

* A palanquin-bearer, or menial. † Boatswain. ‡ His mate.
|| i. e. at day-light.

away. Continually were we surrounded by paunchways *, until the brig was laden up to the very beams, and could receive no more. The freight paid at Calcutta cleared the cost and outfit of the vessel, as well as four months' advance to the crew, which consisted of two Portuguese secunnies †, one syrang, who was a mussulmaun, two tyndals (Mahomedans), and sixteen lascars ‡, of different casts. An European officer would, I considered, entail on me an expence beyond what my means were likely to afford, and on that account I declined receiving one; I was therefore the only European on board. My next object was to get the vessel insured. I found that, as she had only *one deck*, she could not be insured "free of average," but "against risk" only; consequently, if she should be *totally lost*, I should recover, but not in the case of damage. I tried to reverse this usage, and to get her insured "free of average," but in vain: it was impossible under any premium. Nothing discouraged, I supplied myself with a good chronometer, (a quadrant I had), a chart of the Indian Ocean, Horsburgh's Directory, with a compass or two; and thus equipped, I obtained my port-clearance, and received on board my pilot. All being now ready for sea, Moodoosooden Chetarjee, whose exertions on this occasion merited my warmest praise, received, with apparent satisfaction, a present of one hundred rupees, and accompanied me to the ghaut (or landing-place), invoking the blessings of the Prophet on my head, and praying that he would make me very rich.

Before I proceed in my narrative, I cannot avoid remarking how lamentable it is, that one can hardly move a step on fair India's shore, without having the feelings outraged, or the eye offended, by the savage exhibition of her barbarous superstitions and customs. Thus, when we reached the ghaut, we found a miserable, shrivelled old woman, whose natural life was apparently near its close, lying at low-water mark, with her feet towards the river, looking mournfully and in despair around her, and waiting only for the rise of tide to cover her from the world for ever. Her mouth and nostrils were nearly stuffed with mud; and, incredible as it may appear, it was by her own children that she was left in that condition, and doomed to that fate. Having placed

* Boats for the conveyance of cargo.

† Quarter-masters. ‡ Sailors.

placed her there, they went away, leaving a domestic of the family to watch, and to prevent any one from interfering with her. I asked Moodoosooden the reason of this, and if her fate could not be prevented?—"She might," I added, "yet recover, if carried home, and proper attention were paid her; or, if not, it would be an act of mercy to let the poor old creature die peaceably in her bed."—"It is, my lord," replied Moodoosooden, "the *custom*: if it is not her fate thus to die, she will get up and return home; but if she cannot do that, her time is come, and nothing can protract it. The waters of the Hooghly," he added, "will purify her spirit, and fit her to enter Paradise: hundreds die thus every day."—"Why do not the police look to it, Moodoosooden?"—"The police," he rejoined, "do not interfere with matters of our religion." It was only the same morning, when, being at a different ghaut, and seeing a crowd of natives, who were forming a circle, and making a loud noise, to the sound of the tum-tum, I ventured to look in, and observe what was going forward. In the midst of the circle was a middle-aged female, who, having been wrought to a pitch of extraordinary excitement, probably by drugs, was wringing her hands and dancing in a wild frantic manner: at her feet was placed a cistern of red-hot charcoal, before which she first lay prostrate, and in the height of her frenzy, three times, for two or three seconds at a time, pressed her face closely on the fire, to the delight and admiration of the surrounding crowd, testified by the clapping of hands, and by discordant shouts and yells. She was taken up in a senseless state, and conveyed home in a palanquin. I could just see enough of her face to feel regret that my curiosity had prompted me to look at it at all.

I must not omit to mention a circumstance which, for its singularity, obtained great notoriety at the time in Calcutta. A sick Hindoo youth, deprived of the use of his limbs, was left at the verge of the banks of the river Hooghly, at low water, apparently doomed to inevitable destruction. The waters rose—covered his feet—approached his neck—his chin—his mouth—when, at that moment, a lieutenant of one of the Company's cruizers, who was an eye-witness from his ship, which lay close in shore, of the youth's perilous situation, and was actuated by the best of feelings for a fellow-creature in imminent peril, manned his boat with a

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chosen few of Europeans, rescued the youth from a barbarous death, in spite of a formidable host of natives, collected with missiles and other weapons to oppose him, and conveyed him on board his ship. Under proper treatment the youth recovered, and lived to reward his benefactor, by proving to him a faithful and diligent servant.

To proceed with my narrative. I was now to sail as captain and owner, and was perhaps the youngest commander that ever conducted a vessel out of the port of Calcutta, not having then attained my eighteenth year. My other disadvantages were by no means slight: I had the command of foreigners, with whose language I was but imperfectly acquainted, and who, with one exception, knew absolutely nothing of mine. My knowledge, however, of Bengallee was sufficient to enable me to issue the necessary orders without difficulty, and the helmsman I commanded in Portuguese.

Arrived off the Sand-heads, the pilot bade me farewell, gallantly refusing the customary present of fifty rupees (£6 : 5s.), remarking—" You are but beginning the world, and will require them yourself;" an instance of disinterestedness highly honourable to him, and gratifying to my feelings, but such as could scarcely have been expected, even in one of a race of men proverbially generous.

The weight of responsibility attached to the command of a ship at sea, is extremely heavy;—indeed, so oppressive to the mind, as scarcely to be conceived by those who have not felt it. The valuable cargo, and still more valuable lives under my care, were constantly, as it were, before my mind's eye, and kept me unceasingly on the watch for nights together, when all on board*, except the Portuguese at the helm, were buried in quiet and profound slumber; when—

> " E'en the stars did wink, as 'twere, with overwatching,"

then would I, and I alone, feel deprived of the power to sleep, and pace the deck, shrouded in anxiety and care.

To anxiety and care, however, I had one antidote, having provided

* It may be necessary here to observe, that in the steady breezes of the trade-winds and monsoons, a vessel frequently sails for days together, without the necessity of either a rope or sail being moved, no person's services being in requisition but those of the helmsman, and of the officer in command.

vided myself with my favourite authors, Milton, Shakspeare, Goldsmith, Addison, Sterne, and Thomson; together with the novels of Fielding and Smollett. It has often struck me, that a concurrence of circumstances more favourable to reading, cannot well take place, than that in which a person finds himself, when seated to leeward, on board a ship sailing in the Indian Ocean, about the close of day, with the wind a little before the beam, the breeze refreshing the spirits, and the foam-crowned surge rushing by. Such a combination soothes the mind, tends to relieve care, and to charm the soul into a belief of happiness possessed; then does thought overleap its earthly boundary, and anticipate a future state of existence. This then was my relaxation in the evening, until nature withdrew her light. After an interval I watched with delight, either the waves, as they assumed a silvery brightness from the rising moon, or the planets and stars, now grown familiar to me, as they rose and set. The benefits of science likewise engaged my thoughts; and, in the actual and immediate enjoyment of the use of the needle, the chronometer, the quadrant, and the invention of logarithms, which enabled me to shape my course through the deep waters, I felt intensely grateful for them.

In sailing along the coast of Coromandel, from the northward, the only relief afforded to the eye from the barren appearance of its sandy beach, and the dreary aspect of its inhospitable shore, with the exception of now and then a pagoda*, rearing its towering head, is the view of the towns of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, and Masulipatam. The latter is celebrated for the excellence of its snuff; and at Vizagapatam are manufactured very neat and ingenious ivory work-boxes, mounted with ebony, and inlaid with sandal wood; they are sold for ten or fifteen pagodas † each; and are usually bought up as presents for Europe. To the north of Madras, off Pulicat, there is a dangerous shoal, called Pulicat-shoal; it projects out to sea for some miles, and I was particularly careful to give this fatal spot a wide birth: we passed it in the night, and on the morning of the following day, the flag-staff of Fort St. George, and the ships at anchor in Madras roads, appeared in sight. At two o'clock I came to an anchor in eight fathoms

* A place of worship of the Hindoos.

† A star pagoda is a gold coin of the value of three and a-half Rs. or about eight shillings English money.

thoms water; and a boat coming off, I went on shore, to make the necessary arrangements to disembark my freight, leaving my vessel in charge of an active and intelligent Portuguese seamnie, who spoke a little English, and was a clever seaman.

The difficulty and, not unfrequently, the danger of landing at Madras are great, from the tremendous surf, which, gathering strength as it approaches the beach, breaks, at the distance of a mile, and in boisterous weather, even a mile and a half, from the shore. Boats of a particular construction, called masoolah-boats, are made expressly for this service; the parts connecting the sides and bottom of which are *sewed* together with coir * yarn, not a nail being used. They are thus well adapted to their purpose, yielding to the violent shocks which they receive, both at sea and on touching ground. They are each about fifteen feet long, and seven wide, and manned by six Indians and a steersman. No sooner were we in the midst of the surf, than on looking behind, I saw a tremendous sea advancing, rising to a height which astonished me, and gaining strength every moment: before us appearances were equally threatening. We were soon overtaken by the wave behind, which lifted us up on its bosom to an immense height, roaring and sending us onward with the swiftness of lightning; the Indians jabbering all the while, as if they were alarmed—" *Yeal-hee, yeal-hee! yeal-hee, yeal-hee!* †". This scene, terrific as it was, proved to the steersman but the scene of his " vocation;" and he did not forget the reward in prospect, but asked for a *box*, or present. This was perhaps his policy; he thought, that at such a moment, I could not refuse him. Another tremendous sea followed, lifting us up still higher, and impelling us forward with great velocity, until the fore part of the boat took the ground; she then swiftly wheeled round on her beam-ends. Then it is that the danger is most imminent, for the next sea almost instantly striking the side of the boat, perhaps upsets it, when it not unfrequently happens that one or two lives are lost. In our case, the boat, when struck, turned very nearly over; but being, though a young man, an old sailor, I held

* Coir, so called, is the husk of the cocoa-nut, which being cleaned, leaves nothing but fibres, that are made into rope, which is used as that of hemp, and in the dry season is little inferior.

† Words of encouragement, similar to our " hurrah!"

I held on by the weather-gunwale, until successive seas threw her "high and dry" on the beach. Palanquins without number were ready to receive me, and stepping into one, I was in a few minutes at the Navy Hotel.

Madras, as seen from the sea, has an imposing, shewy appearance; presenting a continued line of superb buildings, with a peristyle of many columns in front of the verandahs along the beach. In the rear of these buildings stands the "Black Town," so called from its being the residence of the native population. The noble appearance of the houses fronting the beach is heightened by a composition, made from sea-shells, and called *chunam*, with which they are plastered. It is very durable, and when kept clean and entire, rivals Parian marble itself, and gives to the colonades, and indeed to any building to which it is applied, a lustre which, reflected by the sun's rays, produces an effect splendid in the extreme. As to Black Town, it is nothing more than a mass of mean houses and huts, jumbled together with "most admired disorder:" an earthquake could scarcely produce more chaotic confusion. The Government House is a handsome edifice, but not imposing in appearance; nor will it bear a comparison with the Government House of Calcutta. It is situated about a mile and a half to the southward of Fort St. George.

The governor, the military officers, civilians, and merchants, reside in garden-houses, at a convenient distance from Black Town, whither they usually resort in the daytime, for the transaction of public or private business. There the merchants have their offices, and there, in large rooms built for the purpose, the shopkeepers display to the best advantage their goods, both European and oriental. After the business of the day is terminated, usually about three o'clock, the merchants return to their gardens, dress, and before dinner take a ride on the carriage-roads, of which the principal, called Mount-road, is the most frequented. The garden-houses of Madras, with their accompaniments, are, in point of elegance, taste, and rural beauty, nearly as captivating as Garden Reach, near Calcutta.

Having been furnished by my agents in Calcutta with letters of introduction to Messrs. Arbuthnot, De Monte, & Co. of Madras, I was favoured by these gentlemen with invitations to dinner

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at their garden-houses, where every thing around me bore the marks of luxurious splendour and rare magnificence. My experience here proved to me that nothing can exceed the gaiety of Madras society. The fortress is separated from the town by an esplanade outside the gates: it stands on the sea shore, and presents six fronts towards the land. Its depôts of arms are spacious; and, with a good garrison, it is considered capable of holding out for a length of time against any army that could be brought against it. The accommodations for the military officers and soldiers doing duty in Fort St. George are of a very superior description.

The business of entering my vessel at the custom-house, and making preparations for landing my freight, being settled, I returned to the hotel. No sooner was I seated in a spacious room, affording a pleasant prospect of Fort St. George, and of the esplanade in front, than a bevy of dubashes * surrounded me, each eager that his services should be accepted. At the recommendation of the master of the hotel, I selected one, named *Koondar Gruar*; he was a tall stately personage, intensely black; through his nose he wore a large gold ring; and his fingers were covered with massy rings of the same precious metal, some of them set with topazes, pearls, and emeralds. Of his mustachios, which were enormously large, he seemed not a little vain, for he was continually smoothing them upwards with his fore-finger and thumb. He commented, in glowing terms, on the luxury of having the fingers jointed, the ears cleaned, and the nails paired, before dinner; and recommended me to undergo these operations, alleging that it was the *custom*, and very *refreshing*. Before I could well make a reply, an active little personage, also with a ring through his nose, began to pull my fingers, and made each of them crack to pretty quick time, and not without pain; he then, without ceremony, laid hold of my head with his two hands, turned it round, introduced a small instrument into my ear, and cleaned it out, almost before I was aware what he was about; to the other, he did the same: when he had finished, he placed his thumb inside the ear, and on withdrawing it, contrived, by some manœuvre, to produce a noise not unlike the report of a pop-gun, and nearly as loud. Then, taking my cheeks between his two hands,

* Similar to the baboos of Bengal.

hands, he suddenly twisted my neck over my right shoulder, and with such quickness and violence, that I almost imagined a dislocation to have been produced. I had little time, however, to consider, for the indefatigable operator twirled it round again, just as expeditiously on the other side; I was about to testify my dislike to these operations, when, with a sudden jerk, he restored my head to its natural position; and while I was doubting whether it was safe or not, he made a very low bow, holding out his hand for a *box* (or present), Koondar Gruar and his attendants, all the while, standing by and looking on with great gravity. I told Koondar Gruar to give him five *fanams**, but, skilful as he was, resolved never again to put myself under his hands.

Another operator then made his appearance, having in one hand, an instrument for paring my nails, and in the other, a pair of enormous tweezers; but I immediately arrested his progress, by telling Koondar Gruar "it was my intention to take that trouble upon myself;" and added, "send all these attendants away—I want nobody at present but yourself." On this, they were all, with an important show of bustle on the part of my dubash, turned out of the room. Soon, however, they returned, slily, one by one, until the room, in a few minutes, was as full as ever. While I was asking Koondar Gruar if he could procure me any freight for Pondicherry and Ceylon, in came a man, bearing on his shoulders no less a personage than the celebrated "*Dumnakurk*," a dwarf, standing hardly twenty-three inches high, but having a head as large as that of a grown up person. It appeared that he had many years before made a voyage to England, under the care of the captain of an Indiaman, who reaped a rich harvest by the exhibition of him; but whether Dumnakurk himself profited by the trip, I did not ascertain. On his return to his native country, the arrows of Cupid made great havock in the breast of the little hero, who married the object of his affections, and in 1814, was the father of seventeen children, all of them grown up to perfect manhood. He danced before me with infinite glee and good humour, holding out his little hand, or rather fin, singing—"*Dumnakurk, Dumnakurk, give little Dumnakurk*," until, beckoning Koondar Gruar, I told him to give Dumnakurk twenty fanams. Scarcely had Dumnakurk mounted on the back of (as I understood)

* Fanam, a silver coin, worth about twopence halfpenny.

understood) one of his sons, disappeared, than a juggler squatted himself down before me, and, without waiting for a signal to begin, first introduced into his mouth a sword, the blade of which was about twenty inches in length, and one broad, and thence up to the very hilt into his stomach; then drawing it out suddenly, threw it down at my feet. Of this, and of other feats of legerdemain, such as spitting fire, balancing by means of the mouth, throwing balls, &c. those who have seen the celebrated "Ramo Samee" in England, may form an idea; but this juggler by far surpassed Ramo Samee in his concluding feat; for he actually forced upwards, with apparent pain, and held in his two hands, at the distance of seven inches from his mouth, a *gut*, which after the lapse of a second or two, he replaced. I stood within two feet of him at the time, and was convinced that no deception could be resorted to. In this conviction I was afterwards confirmed, by the testimony of many of my own countrymen, old sojourners in India, who assured me it was a feat which had become very common with jugglers, but which was discredited by medical men in England, and even in India, until, of late, ocular demonstration compelled the latter to admit as a fact, what had before appeared to them altogether impracticable, and unworthy of belief. This exquisite treat, however meritorious it might appear in the eyes of the surrounding natives, produced a qualmish sensation on my stomach; so telling Koondar Gruar to give the juggler five fanams, I dismissed him, once more ordering the room to be cleared. My order was apparently obeyed with alacrity, and I was about to congratulate myself on having got rid of these officious visitants, when, on looking round, I saw one man still remaining, and (as he supposed) artfully concealed behind a screen. On inquiring his business, he produced from beneath his vest a small box, in which was a black scorpion of an enormous size; he next called my attention to a stone of about the size and shape of a kidney bean, eulogizing its virtue, as capable of extracting the deadly venom of the reptile's sting; and to convince me of the truth of his assertion, permitted the scorpion to sting his fore finger, which bled profusely, and immediately swelled. The stone, on being applied to the wound, stuck on for the space of a minute, and then fell off, exhibiting a green mark about the spot which had been in contact with the wound,

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and leaving the finger apparently healed: him I dismissed with a present of three fanams. A gentle knocking at the door now drew my attention to a new intrusion. A man, with a basket full of "dancing serpents," of a large and rare kind, sought admittance: but my patience being exhausted, I positively forbad his entrance, telling Koondar Gruar that I came to his country not in pursuit of curiosities or pleasure, but on business. "Ah, master," he replied, "I know you white man all got clever head: no think pleasure, think more high!"

All the freight I had on board for Madras was soon landed; and I was happy when Koondar Gruar assured me he could procure plenty for Pondicherry. I was aware that a fortune was to be made, if at all, by extraordinary exertion and activity, and by these alone. Day after day, therefore, myself, my dubash, and my crew, were indefatigably engaged in landing and shipping cargo; and during my stay at Madras, but few hours were devoted to the indulgence of ease, or of other pleasure than duty. The means which I possessed of enjoying many happy hours, were ample, from the circumstance of my having become acquainted with some of my fellow-countrymen, whose friendship and agreeable society have, to this day, left an indelible impression on my heart. Our acquaintance began thus:—in the hotel was a billiard-table, at which, on my entering the room, I found two gentlemen busily engaged,—the one, a distinguished German merchant, named Endtfield, just arrived from Padang, on the West Coast of Sumatra, and who was then on his way to Bengal, to conduct two of his daughters home from boarding-school; and the other, a Captain Harcourt, commanding a brig. A young lieutenant of the army, named Bowers, and two lieutenants of the navy, whom I afterwards found to be brothers, were standing round the table, taking great interest in the game. Englishmen, in a foreign country, need no better introduction to each other, than that of moving in the same sphere of society; so that we all soon became acquainted: bottled ale (esteemed a great luxury in the East) circulated with rapidity, and an acquaintance in England, of twenty years standing, could scarcely have made us better friends.

Endtfield was a man of about forty-five years of age, apparently of a serious turn of mind, and of deep reflection, of which qualities, indeed, his countenance bore indications. He was fond of conversing

conversing on matters of religion; and possessed, to all appearances, a warm heart and amiable feelings. Bowers and Harcourt, on the contrary, were young and gay, and full of spirits, each possessing a ready and agreeable wit: the two sailors, whose names were John and Richard Burjen, were dashing lieutenants, fresh from ship-board, and ready for any enterprise whatever, whether offering a chance of fun, or of danger: the elder brother however exhibited on his brow the evidences of a cast of reflection, which occasionally, interfering with the display of his naturally convivial disposition, would relieve itself with a sigh. With these friends I enjoyed, whenever the duties of my vessel afforded me an opportunity, some happy and delightful hours. I esteemed them all, but especially the two brothers: there was a sympathy of soul among us, on all subjects connected with thought and sentiment. Often would we walk together, arm in arm, on the sandy beach of Malabar, while the silvery moon lit our footsteps—the balmy sweets of a verdant country, wafted in odoriferous and gentle gales, enchanted our senses;—and the hollow roarings of the surge heightened the pleasing grandeur of the scene, and inspired in our breasts a sensation pleasingly awful and sublime. Then would we talk of our native land—of those most dear to us in it; and still add another hope to thousands, that a time would come when we should there all meet happily once again. The expanse of ocean—the blue arched firmament, cloudless and adorned with stars and brilliant constellations—the surrounding country, teeming with objects new to us, and the race who inherit it, would also be our themes, until our thoughts rose to the munificent Creator of the whole!—the Incomprehensible! expression then failed, and we would conclude our walk, absorbed in profound and silent admiration. Thrice happy hours! never to be obliterated from my memory: the recollection of them, even to this day, affords me relief whenever I am sad!

These gentlemen and myself having received from a Portuguese merchant, of the name of Rutter, invitations to his garden-house, situated about four or five miles from Madras, it was agreed, that with him we should take a farewell dinner, previously to my departure. To this excellent man I had delivered some freight from Calcutta, and he was good enough to shew me every possible attention during my stay at Madras. On the evening agreed upon, we

engaged three gigs to be in readiness for us by five o'clock; and in about half an hour, we started; but our journey thither and back was replete with disasters. In the first place, Mr. Endtfield, who drove Captain Harcourt, could not make his horse proceed a single step; the application of the whip only caused the obstinate animal to retrograde. A fresh horse was procured, which evinced as eager a desire to run away, as the other had shown an inclination not to go at all. These difficulties were scarcely surmounted, when Bowers had the mortification to discover, that his dress regimental coat (which, by the way, was a new one) was soiled nearly all over with *lamp black*, with which the inside of the gig was very liberally daubed: and almost at the same time, the gig in which the two lieutenants were going at a pretty quick rate, or, as they termed it, "before the wind *," suddenly stopped, the eldest bawling out—"*A-hoy there!—I've sprung a leak, d'ye see;*" and true enough, one of the springs had given way, and thrown the body of the gig into a transverse position: they however galloped on, saying—" Never mind! its only a *lurch to leeward*, that's all!" to the surprise of the passers-by, who enjoyed the accident, believing it to be an intentional freak of the two sailors.

Mr. Rutter welcomed us with great cordiality, and conducted us into the hall—a noble room, the floor of which was inlaid with marble. Folding doors were now opened, and under a scarlet velvet canopy, richly embroidered with gold, sat two lovely daughters of our host. The eldest was an oriental beauty, and received us gracefully, while a pair of large black eyes sparkled a welcome. The youngest was equally handsome—in the judgment of the youngest sailor, more so; at all events, the syren succeeded in implanting in his breast a " first-sight love," which, I have heard him say, "he never could entirely forget." Other folding doors were next thrown open, and a table sumptuously laid invited us to be seated. The soup was mulligatawny, a favourite dish at Madras, whose inhabitants have the reputation of excelling in the making of it: it is a rich curry soup, highly seasoned, and very delicious. Ham and turkey, rice, and curries of all sorts, pasties, and abundance of champagne and claret, were the fare. After dinner

* This phrase, as applied to land-travelling, is in a fair way of becoming appropriate: I allude to the recent invention of propelling carriages through a tunnel by means of atmospheric pressure.

dinner we retired to an adjoining apartment, where the young ladies favoured us with dulcet strains from the piano, in a style reflecting much credit on their taste and execution. An unceremonious dance in the hall concluded the entertainment; and at four in the morning, we mounted our vehicles in high glee, under a favourable impression of the hospitality of our kind host and his two charming daughters. In me, however, high spirits were succeeded by busy thought on the happy moments which had sped; and whether it was reflection or champagne, or both, that made me over-wise, I adopted the conviction that the stump of a tree was a shadow, and this notable "error in judgment" hurled myself and Bowers in an instant to the opposite side of the road, and there left us sprawling. In a little time, with the assistance of our fellow-travellers, who were laughing and joking all the while, we were ready to start afresh, fortunately without having received any injury.

The following day, every thing being ready for sea, Koondar Gruar attended me to make his farewell salam. On my taking leave of Endtfield, he shook me cordially by the hand, desiring me, if ever I needed his assistance, to write to him at Padang, and to be assured that I should not find myself neglected. Bowers, Harcourt, and the two brothers, accompanied me to the beach; and with exchanged expressions of hope that we should meet again in some quarter of the globe or other, I crossed the formidable surf, reached my vessel, and set sail for Pondicherry the same evening.

The north-east monsoon wafted us pleasantly to the southward. The next day, a remarkable tuft of trees, celebrated as a landmark, apprised us that we were approaching Pondicherry. We stood under easy sail during the night, and on the following morning came to an anchor in Pondicherry Roads.

Pondicherry was at that period in the possession of the English; but it has since been restored to the French: it is a small town, whither the English military officers, and civilians, occasionally resort for the benefit of a change of air, and for relaxation from their several duties. No place in India has stronger attractions for visitors than Pondicherry. A company of French amateur musicians regaled the inhabitants with music on the Esplanade, in the open air, from eight to ten, usually on moonlight nights. Private concerts, masquerades, dances, and card-parties,

 collected

collected together the votaries of pleasure, that is, with few exceptions, all the inhabitants of this charming settlement; but what, more than any thing else, attracts the notice and admiration of strangers, is, the transcendent beauty of the female portion of those of the European inhabitants who are descendants of French families. Their complexion is a happy combination of the lily and the rose; the graceful ease and unaffected freedom of their manners in the drawing-room, are as captivating as their movements at the ball; and the elegant simplicity and neatness of their dress, exhibit a chasteness of taste peculiar to themselves. More English have chosen partners for life from among the ladies of Pondicherry, than from those of any other settlement of the same extent in India; and every match, at least on the part of the gentleman, is truly a "love-match;" for the girls have no treasure but their charms.

The cargo I had on board was consigned to a celebrated military officer, who had been one of the first to mount the breach at the storming of Seringapatam, and had there received a severe wound. In his declining years, he retired from the toils of his profession to Pondicherry; and in the endearments of his lovely partner, sought that repose and happiness to which, in early life, the duties and dangers of his profession had made him a stranger. He now concerned himself with little else than mercantile pursuits on a small scale, and with those, more with the view of employing his active and comprehensive mind, than with that of profit. To him the old and young would repair, to seek the benefit of his counsel in time of doubt or trouble; and at his house I found a happy home during my stay at Pondicherry. There, the beauty and fashion of the settlement assembled twice or thrice a-week, either at a dance, a card-party, or a supper; and there it was I beheld the lovely girl, the rumour of whose charms had already resounded from one end of the peninsula of India to another*. Though descended from poor parents, her hand, I was informed, had been sought in vain by collectors, colonels, and even generals: her obdurate heart either could not, or would not, receive the soft impression, and she remained single, making fresh conquests almost daily. At this period she was just eighteen, with a form combining symmetry with all the other

* Mademoiselle M••••y.

other graces which are desirable in woman: her complexion was like the lily, delicately fair, and with the lily would have borne comparison; while the rose bloomed on her cheek. Her hair, black and glossy, curled in all the sportive luxuriance of excelling nature, over her finely-turned neck and shoulders; her expanded forehead, silken eyelashes, arched eyebrows, and coral lips, were perfection; but her eyes! who shall describe them? the soul itself spoke through them; and her angelic countenance, animated, open, and free from the least taint of pride or affectation, would have persuaded one that she *could* love, and that in this respect report belied her. The danger of holding converse with charms like hers, soon became apparent; yet the attempt was often made to impress her heart with that feeling which she seemed so eminently formed by nature to inspire in the breasts of others; but she was found to be cold and unsusceptible, and the lover sighing, fled her presence. Yet was she not a coquet; she never *aimed* at conquest. Often, as I gazed, delighted, on her beautiful features, did I express to her a hope, that she would make some one of her numerous admirers happy; and to strengthen my plea, frequently placed before her the following lines, the meaning of which her progress in the English language enabled her perfectly to comprehend:—

> ———————————" Nay, lady,
> Thou'lt be the cruellest she alive,
> To lead all these graces to the grave,
> And leave the world no copy."

By the latest accounts from India, I am informed that she still adheres to her preference of celibacy to the married life.

Under the roof of my worthy host I also saw the lovely Mademoiselle L******h: she was then in deep mental distress; and it is in that state that beauty frequently assumes her loveliest features. An English lieutenant of dragoons, in person elegant, and of superior manners, addressed her with all the ardour of a respectful and sincere love: she loved him in return, and, a stranger to deceit, ingenuously told him so, little suspecting that a heart devoid of every principle of honour—a soul enamoured of depravity, could lie concealed under the mask of so fair an exterior. The wedding-day was fixed; the unsuspecting girl, surrounded by doting parents and beloved friends, was hailed, in every circle, with congratulations and blessings: how happy

 then

then was her young and inexperienced heart! but, alas! how soon was she doomed to taste the bitter cup of wo, withheld from her only by the intervening lapse of a few fleeting hours! Her lover, unaccustomed to control his violent and impetuous passions, marked her as his own, from the moment when he first saw her, and determined to possess her, even at the price of marriage, and of her ruin: he well knew his debts were overwhelming, and his creditors importunate—he knew that the inevitable consequence of his marriage would be, to be dragged from the bridal bed, to a gaol; and that the charms of his victim were her only portion: still did he persevere, and had the art to conceal from her poor and aged parents, not only the darling propensities of his soul—gaming, extravagance, and debauchery, but also the actual state of his circumstances, and the hopelessness of his prospects. The storm at length burst, and, as if in pity to the victim, spared her the greater evil—on the very morning of the intended nuptials, he was arrested, and his real character exposed by his creditors. Covered with confusion, obloquy, and shame, he was thrown into prison, and there left to brood over the consequences of his criminality and cruelty.

By the prompt assistance which I received from my friendly host, who, through his influence with the master-attendant, procured me an extra supply of cargo-boats, I was soon enabled to effect my lading; but not satisfied with this, he generously took a warmer interest in my affairs, and I thus succeeded in securing a rich freight from Columbo (whither I was next bound) to the Mauritius; and on my return, another from Tappanooly, on the west coast of Sumatra, for Bengal. These advantages were great, and could not have been obtained without the intervention of so distinguished and respected an individual as my friend.

It was one Sunday morning, and the hour eleven, when in England the church-bells are summoning to public worship, that on my way to the house of a French merchant, for the purpose of settling about the freight, we called on the honourable Mrs. T——, the widow of a French officer, and made our bow to a large party engaged at cards—a custom usual with the French on Sundays. I had not much time to reflect on the scene before me, when a very sweet girl, the eldest daughter of the hostess, approached me, and with that solicitude for the comfort and convenience of visitors, for which the fair of Pondicherry are distinguished,

distinguished, seated herself by my side, close to a small table apart from the rest of the company. Her auburn hair hung in ringlets over her fair bosom, and a pair of soft blue eyes, expressive of a desire to please, effected their object completely; so that in three minutes we became as well acquainted and familiar as if we had been intimate for as many years. Her pronunciation of the English language was imperfect; but with great good-nature, spreading the cards before us, she said—"Now look at me."—"Oh, that I certainly will!"—"I do mean [laughing] you must not any more look at de cards."—"No: I will, with your permission, look at you in preference."—"Very well—as you please. Now tink of one card."—"I have."—"But you must not *tell* me what you tink ontill I ask."—"Oh no."—"Well den, I must tink of one also." After considering, she shuffled the cards—"Now," she resumed, "You must tell me de card you tink of."—"The queen of *hearts*."—"*De queen of hearts!* how strange! de very card dat I did tink of too!"

What there was in the mention of "queen of hearts" to bring into her beauteous neck and cheeks the vermilion which "spread like a mantle o'er her," those who are better versed than myself in the secret impulses of the heart, may possibly form an idea: I was that instant summoned to depart, which I did reluctantly, never having before, in so short a space of time, been a party to a friendship so apparently mutual. I pressed her delicate hand at parting, and could no more dispel a sudden tremor of delight which then came over me, than I could control the course of the planets; and to this day the "queen of hearts" never fails to whisper to my memory the charms of the lovely Miss T——.

No sooner was I ushered, by my friend, into the presence of the merchant, than he exclaimed—"Ah, be Ga! what have we got here? dis be one vary young capitain indeed!" Having seated ourselves at a table, on which were pen, ink, and paper, he satisfied himself on certain necessary particulars, and drew out agreements respecting freight, which were mutually signed and sealed. In a few days afterwards I set sail for Columbo, parting from my friend with deep regret; and not without wafting, in many a sigh, an adieu to the fair inhabitants—a tribute, I may add, exacted from the breast of every Englishman on leaving Pondicherry.

So

So far my career, as captain and owner, had been both successful, and replete with fair promises; even the winds seemed to encourage my hopes. Unmolested by a shower of rain, or by a cloud in the heavens, we sailed nearly round the spicy island of Ceylon, delighted at the variegated aspect of its shores. Off Trincomalay, Beligaum, and Point de Galle, a canoe, laden with the plaintain, the melon, the pine-apple, the quince, the luscious jack, the mango, the sweet date, and green cocoa, would be frequently seen approaching; and having reached us, it emptied its freight on our deck. At length, we came within sight of Columbo. It was just about the setting of the sun when the flag-staff appeared in sight. A dangerous rock, called the "*Drunken Sailor*," threatening us, in a hollow voice, with destruction among its breakers, was about a mile to leeward of us. From the land came a gentle swell, and a light air, which but just set the calm bosom of the glittering sea in motion, while the refreshing fragrance around, lulled the mind into a state of luxurious ease and enjoyment. We came to an anchor in the roadstead precisely at eight o'clock, and after squaring the yards, and setting the watch, retired to rest.

At Columbo, my extreme youth, together with the circumstances of my having a command, and being owner, not only attracted attention, but procured me many friends, the benefit of whose assistance and advice, affording me greater facilities than I could otherwise have had in the landing and shipping of cargo, I enjoyed to a considerable extent. The cargo I now received on board was cocoa-nut oil, for the Isle of France; and in three weeks I was ready for sea. I set sail, in the height of the spirit of enterprise, calculating my gains daily; and, in the midst of my subsequent successes, I all but flattered myself that I had gained possession of the philosopher's stone. On the lowest estimate which I could correctly make, I calculated that, on my return to Calcutta, which I concluded would be in about six months from this period, I should be worth six thousand pounds, which would justify me in the ambition of aspiring to the command of a large ship. Thus, from day to day, was my head incessantly at work, and my attention divided between the present responsibility and the fortune in prospect. "Castle-building" indeed was a science which I studied indefatigably; and, imagining that I saw the end from the beginning, I at once wrote to my father, requesting him to send my brother

ther John, to India, engaging to ensure him the opportunity of making, with the aid of industry and prudence, a rapid fortune. I had afterwards reason to regret my precipitancy; but it was a matter of consolation to me, that the measure had its source, alone in brotherly love and good intention.

Hitherto my navigation had been either in sight of land, or within a few miles of it; now I was to bid farewell to the coast, and explore the wide waters of the Indian Ocean. Our approach to the equinoctial, whose gales not unfrequently devote the mariner and his bark to the unfathomable deep, was marked by the usual circumstances;—an occasional shower;—shoals of flying-fishes, which ever and anon met, on our deck, that fate with which some natural enemy had threatened them in another shape;—albicores, darting onward under each quarter; and the dolphin, which, having for a short time sported glibly by our side, seized the deadly bait, and being dragged on board, and suspended on a shroud, would in its agony, exhibit its matchless varying hues: the voracious shark too, turning on his back, would seize the piece of tempting flesh, and pursue his way until the galling iron arrested his progress;—he tries to fly, and tortured with pain and rage, covers the sea with foam; but the attempt is vain; in a short time his huge, unseemly carcase lies extended on our deck—in vain his powerful tail lashes it—in vain he opens wide his enormous jaws, lined with quadruple rows of piercing teeth, which he gnashes in agony; the wary seaman, hatchet in hand, and with muscular arm, after repeated blows, severs the head from the body, and leaves it, in its gore, on the deck.

Feeling the weight of the responsibility attached to my command less severely at sea than when sailing along the Coromandel Coast, I was the more disposed, during my leisure hours, to indulge in my favourite pursuit of reading. The German flute was another source of amusement. My table being amply supplied with mutton and poultry, hams, wines, and liqueurs, how often would I inwardly rejoice, when I compared my own successes, and happy state, with the condition of others! nay, I almost imagined that the loud complaints of poverty and misfortune were the outcry of the idle and dissolute alone; and came to the conclusion, that no art could be more easily acquired than that of becoming rich.

Once

Once every month, on the first night of the new moon, the lascars, conformably to their custom, approached me, one by one, to make their obeisance, invoking, at the same time, the protection of the prophet Mahommed for the next month, and thanking him for the blessings of the last. During the evenings, the Portuguese would, oft, in the waist, beguile the hours with a song, and cheering chorus, while the lascars pursued their several avocations by themselves. Few ships' companies were happier than mine—few commanders more willingly obeyed.

Six weeks after our departure from Ceylon, we made the latitude of the Isle of France, being, according to my calculation, distant from it about one hundred and twenty miles, due *East*. In two days and nights we ran down not less than three hundred and fifty miles of longitude, but without seeing land. After a time, one of the secunnies announced "Land in sight!" but, on going aloft, I found the supposed land to be but a cloud, which, in a few minutes, disappeared altogether. About two *p. m.* however, I saw, as I thought, land from the deck, bearing the shape of three black, sloping hillocks; but this too proved a deception, and, like the former, vanished from our sight, first altering its shape, and assuming the appearance of a castle, then that of a black mountain: during the night my anxiety was considerable. With a favourable breeze, we stood on, under easy sail, until half-past four *a. m.* when our hopes were revived by the appearance, at dawn of day (five o'clock), of something which, from the deck indeed, was hardly to be distinguished from a cloud, so much did it resemble one, but which I was, on going aloft, convinced, from the distinctness of its form rising from the glittering sea, was not the shadow, but the substance. By ten o'clock we reached the north-east point of land, and sailed close in shore, in order to reach Port Louis. The blue water near the shore was so remarkably clear, that we could plainly perceive the bottom, at the depth of fifteen fathoms, or ninety feet, to appearance not more than four; thus were the secrets of the deep unfolded to our admiring view;—large beds, or rather forests of coral, red and white, the grotesque branches of which extended for miles, and among them, fishes unknown in Europe, and of various sizes and hues, swimming in sportive gambols. We were now sailing round perhaps the sweetest island that rears its head above the waters of the globe. The fragrance, wafted

wafted in soft breezes from the land, was delightful: here and there, a cottage near the sea beach, greeted our sight, adorning a fairy scene, in which a luxuriant verdure, and trees of great size and beauty, were conspicuous: not a canoe, nor a human being, could we see; all was still, and silent as the tomb. It was a scene of such beauty and repose, as almost to persuade me that I was favoured with an unearthly vision.

At two o'clock the town of Port Louis appeared in sight; and shortly after a pilot came on board, who brought us to an anchor in the inner harbour. At four, I reached the "Hotel Anglais," not without congratulating myself on having, without the assistance of European skill, navigated my bark thousands of miles, and brought her safe into port. I lost no time in making preparations for the landing of my freight, which, in a few days, I commenced under the encouraging and cheering prospect of a speedy termination.

Port Louis, the capital, is a pleasant, clean town, situated partly on a plain, partly on the declivity of a mountain, called Le Pouce, which towers in its rear, and above which rises the lofty peak of "Peter Botre," two thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea. The Government-house faces the landing-place. It is, however, the beauty of the country which forms the principal charm: if the shores of the Isle of France, as seen from the deck of a vessel, are inviting, how enchanting and lovely is its interior scenery! The rural Arcadian cottages of the planters, the neat huts of the slaves, the rich verdure, the hills, dales, rivulets, mountains, and glens, ornamented by stately trees, the tamarind, the mango, the cocoa, and others, combined too in a manner peculiarly diversified, wild, and luxuriant, inspire the stranger with wonder, rapture, and delight. In this paradise, even the slave appears to forget his real condition. Often as he proceeded to his daily labour, have I heard him carol his song of content and happiness*. Dear country! where were spent some

* In making this remark, the author does not mean to convey the remotest idea of the general condition of the slave; that condition is not better than that of the slave of any other country. His happiness, even when at leisure to contemplate the rural scenery of this delightful island, is but apparent, and on the surface. Of the immediate effects, and the *tendency* of slavery, even under its best, that is, its most deceptive aspect, the author's opinion remains unchanged. See Index—"*Slavery.*"

some of the happiest of my youthful days, which fled, too soon away.

Behind Port Louis is a wide plain, called the "Champ de Mars;" there the band of the English regiment played every Sunday evening, for three or four hours; and there, hundreds of girls, in nature's most alluring charm, "dazzling Beauty, attended by her Graces," were seen in the enjoyment of conscious happiness, gay, yet preserving an amiable decorum of manner, which, though heightening their attractions, was, in fact, not the weakest of their safeguards. The island indeed is the Island of Calypso; and should another Telemachus be wrecked on its shores, his Mentor, though he might, and probably would, have to regret his entanglement in the snares of love, would have no cause to fear his falling a prey to vice. But though the island of love, it is the island of misfortune. Subsequently to the author's arrival in 1814, Port Louis lost two-thirds of its houses by fire: and recently (1824), a severe hurricane caused serious damage to the crops, and ruined many of the inhabitants: but if any thing be wanting to entitle it to these distinctions, the pathetic history of Paul and Virginia will supply the defect; and although from the circumstance of its being generally known, the reader may think that a mere reference to it would have been sufficient, I cannot resist the temptation to sketch a brief outline of it, trusting for his indulgence to its authenticity and interesting nature.

Monsieur de la Tour, a native of Normandy, arrived on the island in 1726, bringing with him a young and beautiful wife, whom he had married without fortune, and in opposition to the will of her relations. A short time after his arrival, he embarked for Madagascar, to purchase a few slaves, leaving his wife to await his return, and there fell a victim to the pestilential fever. No sooner did the intelligence of his decease reach the Isle of France, than his effects were seized (probably for debt), and his widow, who was pregnant, found herself left destitute in a strange country, with no other earthly support than one female negro slave, named Mary. From affection to the memory of her husband, whom she dearly loved, she was unwilling to accept protection from a second; she therefore resolved to cultivate a little spot of ground with the assistance of her slave, and thus procure for both the means of subsistence. Misfortune having

armed

armed her with courage, she traversed tracks the most remote and desolate, dreary and unknown. A spot was at last fixed upon, the immediate neighbourhood of which had been already inhabited a year by a young female, named Margaret, who, when surprised by the strangers, was suckling her infant. Margaret was a native of Brittany, and had been seduced by a gentleman, who, adding inhumanity and injustice to seduction, refused to provide for the child of which he was the father. She therefore determined to leave her native village, and seek an asylum for herself, her child, and a faithful slave, named Domingo, in some distant land, in which she hoped to remain concealed from the observation of mankind, or one in which, if inhabited, the loss of her only portion, her reputation, would be unknown.

Madame de la Tour and Margaret, thrown together under such circumstances, naturally formed an attachment to each other, which ultimately ripened into the most tender and permanent friendship. This mutual bond was soon rendered stronger by the circumstance of Madame de la Tour's giving birth to a girl, whom she named *Virginia*, Margaret's boy, but a twelvemonth older, being named *Paul*.

The fondness of the two children for each other was remarkable, even in their infancy, and is thus described by St. Pierre.—" Nothing could exceed the attachment which these infants already displayed for each other. If Paul complained, his mother pointed to Virginia; and at the sight of her, he smiled, and was appeased. If any accident befel Virginia, the cries of Paul gave notice of the disaster, and then Virginia would suppress her complaints, finding that Paul was unhappy. When I came hither, I usually found them quite naked, which is the custom of this country, tottering in their walk, and holding each other by the hands, and under the arms, as we represent the constellation of the Twins. At night, these infants often refused to be separated, and were found lying in the same cradle, their cheeks, their bosoms, pressed close together, their hands thrown round each other's necks, and sleeping, locked in one another's arms."

In this state of humble seclusion did Madame de la Tour and Margaret lead their lives. Rice and fruit, spread on plantain leaves on the floor of their hut, formed their homely repast; and their chief delight consisted in their love for Paul and Virginia, in

contemplating

contemplating their innocence and beauty, and in daily discoveries of new graces. With the exception of an aged neighbour (the original narrator of the tale), this little family had, for years, no intercourse with any human being whatever. A large dog, named Fidelle, and a goat, formed the only addition to their establishment.

The loves of Paul and Virginia increased with their years; they each seem to have been endowed with extraordinary qualities, mental as well as personal:—"Virginia was gentle, modest, and confiding as Eve; and Paul, like Adam, united the figure of manhood with the simplicity of a child." Scarcely had Virginia attained the age of fourteen, when this peaceful and happy society was surprised by a visit from no less a personage than Monsieur de la Bourdonnais, the governor of the island, who was the bearer of letters and costly presents to Madame de la Tour, from an aunt of hers at Paris, a lady of quality and immensely rich. She had deputed the governor to cause Virginia to be immediately sent to her at Paris, for education, alleging it to be her intention to make her heiress to all her wealth. It was with extreme difficulty that Monsieur de la Bourdonnais could persuade either Madame de la Tour or Virginia, even to listen to entreaty; and it was not until after frequent interviews had taken place, and urgent remonstrances been resorted to, that he could obtain a hearing. At length, Madame de la Tour, with the view of benefiting her child, as well as from the fear of offending her aunt, succeeded in persuading Virginia to proceed to Paris, with an understanding, however, that if so disposed, she should return immediately. All Virginia's care, previous to her departure, was directed to the one object of soothing her beloved Paul, whose heart was nearly broken at the prospect of their separation: she solemnly promised him to return, and be his; swore fidelity to him, and received his picture, placing it in her bosom; and declaring, with a flood of tears, that death alone should part them, she embarked.

After a lapse of eighteen months, Paul received from his Virginia a letter, overflowing with tenderness and fond vows of attachment, but evidently written under painful feelings, augmented by an anxiety to suppress them; all that could be gleaned was, that her relation was unkind, reproaching her because she could not

not read and write—with having had the education of a servant;—and that she had formed a determination to return as soon as possible.

At the expiration of a few months from this period, arrived another letter written in the offing, on board a ship named the Saint Geran, and announcing her actual arrival. This intelligence was received by the whole family with delight, but by Paul, with a burst of extatic joy:—What follows is an extract from the work itself.

"It was," says the narrator, "about ten at night, and I was going to extinguish my lamp, when I perceived, through the palisades of my hut, a light in the woods. I arose, and had just dressed myself, when Paul, half wild and panting for breath, sprung on my neck, crying, 'Come along, come along, Virginia is arrived! Let us go to the port: the vessel will anchor at break of day.'

"We instantly set off. As we were traversing the woods of the Sloping Mountain, and were already on the road which leads from the Shaddock Grove to the port, I heard some one walking behind us. When the person, who was a negro, and who advanced with hasty steps, had reached us, I inquired whence he came, and whither he was going with such expedition. He answered, 'I came from that part of the island called Golden Dust, and am sent to the port, to inform the governor that a ship from France had anchored upon the island of Amber; and fires guns of distress, for the sea is very stormy.' Having said this, the man left us, and pursued his journey.

'Let us go,' said I to Paul, 'towards that part of the island, and meet Virginia; it is only three leagues from hence. Accordingly we bent our course thither. The heat was suffocating. The moon had risen, and was encompassed by three large black circles. A dismal darkness shrouded the sky; but the frequent flashes of lightning discovered long chains of thick clouds, gloomy, low hung, and heaped together over the middle of the island, after having rolled with great rapidity from the ocean, although we felt not a breath of wind upon the land. As we walked along, we thought we heard peals of thunder; but after listening more attentively, we found they were the sounds of distant cannon, repeated by the echoes. Those sounds, joined to the tempestuous

aspect of the heavens, made me shudder. I had little doubt that they were signals of distress from a ship in danger. In half an hour the firing ceased, and I felt the silence more appalling than the dismal sounds which had preceded.

"We hastened on without uttering a word, or daring to communicate our mutual apprehensions. At midnight, we arrived on the sea shore at that part of the island. The billows broke against the beach with a horrible noise, covering the rocks and the strand with their foam, of a dazzling whiteness, and blended with sparks of fire. By the phosphoric gleams, we distinguished, notwithstanding the darkness, the canoes of the fishermen, which they had drawn far upon the sand.

"Near the shore, at the entrance of a wood, we saw a fire, round which several of the inhabitants were assembled. Thither we repaired, in order to repose ourselves till morning. One of the circle related, that in the afternoon he had seen a vessel driven towards the island by the currents; that the night had hidden it from his view; and that two hours after sunset he heard the firing of guns in distress, but that the sea was so tempestuous, that no boat could venture out: that a short time after, he thought he perceived the glimmering of the watch-lights on board the vessel, which, he feared, by its having approached so near the coast, had steered between the main land and the little island of Amber, mistaking it for the point of Endeavour, near which vessels pass in order to gain Port Louis. If this was the case, which, however, he could not affirm, the ship, he apprehended, was in great danger. Another islander then informed us, that he had frequently crossed the channel which separates the isle of Amber from the coast, and which he had sounded; that the anchorage was good, and that the ship would there be in as great security as if it were in harbour. A third islander declared it was impossible for the ship to enter that channel, which was scarcely navigable for a boat. He asserted, that he had seen the vessel at anchor beyond the isle of Amber, so that if the wind arose in the morning, it could either put to sea, or gain the harbour. Different opinions were stated upon this subject, which, while those indolent creoles calmly discussed, Paul and I observed a profound silence. We remained on this spot till break of day, when the weather was too hazy to permit of our distinguishing any object at sea, which was covered

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with fog. All that we could descry was a dark spot, which they told us was the Isle of Amber, at a distance of a quarter of a league from the coast. We could only discern, on this gloomy day, the point of the beach where we stood, and the peaks of some mountains in the interior of the island, rising occasionally from amidst the clouds which hung around them.

"At seven in the morning we heard the beat of drums in the woods; and soon after, the governor, Monsieur de la Bourdonnais, arrived on horseback, followed by a detachment of soldiers armed with muskets, and a great number of islanders and blacks. He ranged his soldiers upon the beach, and ordered them to make a general discharge, which was no sooner done, than we perceived a glimmering light upon the water, which was instantly succeeded by the sound of a gun. We judged that the ship was at no great distance, and ran towards that part where we had seen the light. We now discerned, through the fog, the bulk and tackling of a large vessel; and, notwithstanding the noise of the waves, we were near enough to hear the whistle of the boatswain at the helm, and the shouts of the mariners. As soon as the Saint Geran perceived that we were near enough to give her succour, she continued to fire guns regularly at the interval of three minutes. Monsieur de la Bourdonnais caused great fires to be lighted at certain distances upon the strand, and sent to all the inhabitants of that neighbourhood, in search of provisions, planks, cables, and empty barrels. A crowd of people soon arrived, accompanied by their negroes, loaded with provisions and rigging. One of the most aged of the planters approaching the governor, said to him, 'We have heard all night hoarse noises in the mountain, and in the forests: the leaves of the trees are shaken, although there is no wind; the sea-birds seek refuge upon the land: it is certain that all those signs announce a hurricane.'—'Well, my friends,' answered the governor, 'we are prepared for it; and no doubt the vessel also.'

"Every thing, indeed, presaged the near approach of the hurricane. The centre of the clouds in the zenith was of a dismal black, while their skirts were fringed with a copper hue. The air resounded with the cries of the frigate-bird, the cur-water, and a multitude of other sea-birds, which, notwithstanding the obscurity

of the atmosphere, hastened from all points of the horizon to seek for shelter in the island.

"Towards nine in the morning, we heard on the side of the ocean the most terrific noise, as if torrents of water, mingled with thunder, were rolling down the steeps of the mountains. A general cry was heard of 'There is the hurricane!' and in one moment a frightful whirlwind scattered the fog which had covered the Isle of Amber and its channel. The Saint Geran then presented itself to our view: her gallery was crowded with people, her yards and main-top-mast laid upon the deck, her flag shivered, with four cables at her head, and one by which she was held at the stern. She had anchored between the Isle of Amber and the main land, within that chain of breakers which encircles the island, and which bar she had passed over in a place where no vessel had ever been before. She presented her head to the waves which rolled from the open sea; and as each billow rushed into the straits, the ship heaved, so that her keel was in air, and at the same moment her stern, plunging into the water, disappeared altogether, as if it were swallowed up by the surges. In this position, driven by the winds and waves towards the shore, it was equally impossible for her to return by the passage through which she had made her way; or by cutting her cables, to throw herself upon the beach, from which she was separated by sand banks, mingled with breakers. Every billow which broke upon the coast, advanced roaring to the bottom of the bay, and threw planks to the distance of fifty feet upon the land; then, rushing back, laid bare its sandy bed, from which it rolled immense stones, with a hoarse dismal noise. The sea, swelled by the violence of the wind, rose higher every moment: and the channel between this island and the Isle of Amber was but one vast sheet of white foam, with yawning pits of black deep billows. The foam boiling in the gulph was more than six feet high; and the winds which swept its surface, bore it over the steep coast more than half a league upon the land. Those innumerable white flakes, driven horizontally as far as the foot of the mountain, appeared like snow issuing from the ocean, which was now confounded with the sky. Thick clouds of a horrible form, swept along the zenith with the swiftness of birds, while others appeared motionless as rocks. No spot of azure could be discerned in

in the firmament; only a pale yellow gleam displayed the objects of earth, sea, and skies.

"From the violent efforts of the ship, what we dreaded happened. The cables at the head of the vessel were torn away; it was then held by one anchor only, and was instantly dashed upon the rocks, at the distance of half a cable's length from the shore. A general cry of horror issued from the spectators: Paul rushed towards the sea, when seizing him by the arm, I exclaimed, 'Would you perish?'—'Let me go to save her,' cried he, 'or I die!' Seeing that despair deprived him of reason, Domingo and I, in order to preserve him, fastened a long cord round his waist, and seized hold of each end. Paul then precipitated himself towards the ship, now swimming and now walking upon the breakers. Sometimes he had the hope of reaching the vessel, which the sea in its irregular movements had left almost dry, so that you could have made its circuit on foot; but suddenly the waves advancing with new fury, shrouded it beneath the mountains of water, which then lifted it upright upon its keel. The billows at the same moment threw the unfortunate Paul far upon the beach, his legs bathed in blood, his bosom wounded, and himself half dead. The moment he had recovered his senses, he arose and returned with new ardour towards the vessel, the parts of which now yawned asunder, from the violent strokes of the billows. The crew then, despairing of their safety, threw themselves in crowds into the sea, upon yards, planks, hencoops, tables, and barrels. At this moment we beheld an object fit to excite eternal sympathy; a young lady, in the gallery of the stern of the Saint Geran, stretching out her arms towards him who made so many efforts to join her:—It was Virginia! she had discovered her lover by his intrepidity. The sight of this amiable young woman, exposed to such horrible danger, filled us with unutterable despair. As for Virginia, with a firm and dignified mien, she waved her hand, as if bidding us an eternal farewell. All the sailors had flung themselves into the sea, except one, who still remained upon the deck, and who was naked, and strong as Hercules. This man approached Virginia with respect, and kneeling at her feet, attempted to force her to throw off her clothes; but she repulsed him with modesty, and turned away her head. Then was heard redoubled cries from the spectators, 'Save her! Do not leave her!' But at that moment a

 mountain

mountain billow, of enormous magnitude, engulfed itself between the Isle of Amber and the coast, and menaced the shattered vessel, towards which it rolled, bellowing, with its black sides and foaming head. At this terrible sight the sailor flung himself into the sea; and Virginia, seeing death inevitable, placed one hand upon her clothes, the other on her heart, and lifting up her lovely eyes, seemed an angel prepared to take her flight to heaven.

"Oh, day of horror! Alas, every thing was swallowed up by the relentless billows. The surge threw some of the spectators far upon the beach, whom an impulse of humanity prompted to advance towards Virginia, and also the sailor who had endeavoured to save her life. This man, who had escaped from almost certain death, kneeling on the sand, exclaimed—'Oh, my God! thou hast saved my life, but I would have given it willingly for that poor young woman.'

"Domingo and myself drew Paul senseless to the shore, the blood flowing from his mouth and ears. The governor put him into the hands of a surgeon, while we sought along the beach for the corpse of Virginia. But the wind having suddenly changed, which frequently happens during hurricanes, our search was vain; and we lamented that we could not even pay this unfortunate young woman the last sad sepulchral duties.

"In the mean time, Paul, who began to recover his senses, was taken to a house in the neighbourhood, till he was able to be removed to his own habitation. Thither I bent my way with Domingo, and undertook the sad task of preparing Virginia's mother and her friend for the melancholy event which had happened. When we reached the entrance of the valley of the river of Fan-Palms, some negroes informed us that the sea had thrown many pieces of the wreck into the opposite bay. We descended towards it, and one of the first objects which struck my sight upon the beach, was the corpse of Virginia. The body was half covered with sand, and in the attitude in which we had seen her perish. Her features were not changed, her eyes were closed, her countenance was still serene; but the pale violets of death were blended on her cheek with the blush of virgin modesty; one of her hands was placed upon her clothes, and the other, which she held on her heart, was fast closed, and so stiffened, that it was with difficulty I took from its grasp a small box. How great was

was my emotion when I saw it contained the picture of Paul, which she had promised him never to part with while she lived! At the sight of this last mark of the fidelity and tenderness of the unfortunate girl, I wept bitterly. As for Domingo, he beat his breast, and pierced the air with his cries. We carried the body of Virginia to a fisher's hut, and gave it in charge to some poor Malabar women, who carefully washed away the sand.

"While they were employed in this melancholy office, we ascended, with trembling steps, to the plantation. We found Madame de la Tour and Margaret at prayer, while waiting for tidings from the ship. As soon as Madame de la Tour saw me coming, she eagerly cried—'Where is my child, my dear child?' —My silence and my tears apprized her of her misfortune. She was seized with convulsive stiflings, with agonizing pains, and her voice was only heard in groans. Margaret cried—'Where is my son? I do not see my son!' and fainted. We ran to her assistance: in a short time she recovered; and being assured that her son was safe, she thought of succouring her friend, who had long successive faintings. Madame de la Tour passed the night in sufferings so exquisite, that I became convinced there was no sorrow like a mother's sorrow.

"Monsieur de la Bourdonnais sent to apprise me secretly, that the corpse of Virginia had been borne to the town by his order, from whence it was to be transferred to the church of the Shaddock Grove. I hastened to Port Louis, and found a multitude assembled from all parts, as if the island had lost its fairest ornament. The vessels in the harbour had their yards crossed, their flags hoisted, and fired guns at intervals. The grenadiers led the funeral procession, with their muskets reversed, their drums muffled, and sending forth slow dismal sounds. Eight young ladies, dressed in white, and bearing palms in their hands, supported the pall of their amiable companion, which was strewed with flowers. They were followed by a band of children, chaunting hymns, and by the governor, his field-officers, all the principal inhabitants of the island, and an immense crowd of people.

"This funeral solemnity had been ordered by the administration of the country, who were desirous of rendering honours to the virtue of Virginia. Companies of young girls ran from the neighbouring plantations to touch the coffin, with their scarfs,

 chaplets,

chaplets, and crowns of flowers—mothers asked of Heaven a child like Virginia—lovers, a heart as faithful—the poor, as tender a friend—and the slaves, as kind a mistress.

"She was interred near the church of the Shaddock Grove, upon the western side, at the foot of a copse of bamboos, where, in coming from mass with her mother and Margaret, she loved to repose herself, seated by him whom she called her brother.

"Paul roamed about the island, attended by faithful Domingo, and his dog Fidele, in a state of frantic melancholy, and died two months after the death of Virginia, whose name dwelt upon his lips, even in his expiring moments. Eight days after the death of her son, Margaret saw her last hour approach, with that serenity which virtue only can feel. She bade Madame de la Tour the most tender farewell—'In the hope,' she said, 'of a sweet and eternal re-union. Death is the most precious good,' added she, 'and we ought to desire it. If life be a punishment, we should wish for its termination; if it be a trial, we should be thankful that it is short.'

"The governor took care of Domingo and Mary, who were no longer able to labour, and who survived their mistresses but a short time. As for poor Fidele, he pined to death at the period he lost his master.

"Madame de la Tour endeavoured to comfort Paul and Margaret till the last moment, as if she herself had no agonies to bear. When they were no more, she used to talk of them as of beloved friends, from whom she was not distant. She survived them but one month.

"The voice of the people, which is often silent with regard to those monuments reared to flatter the pride of kings, has given to some parts of this island, names which will immortalize the loss of Virginia. Near the Isle of Amber, in the midst of sand banks, is a spot called the 'Pass of Saint Geran,' from the name of the vessel which there perished. The extremity of that point of land, which is three leagues distant, and half covered by the waves, and which the Saint Geran could not double, on the night preceding the hurricane, is called the 'Cape of Misfortune;' and where Virginia was found buried in the sand, the 'Bay of the Tomb.'

"The body of Paul was placed by the side of his Virginia, at the

the foot of the same shrubs. At the bottom of the Bay of the Tomb, two mounds are raised to their memory; and of the strangers who land on the island, few there are who omit to visit them: On that hallowed spot the remains of their mothers and faithful servants are also laid."

The glowing description thus given by St. Pierre, of the loves and misfortunes of these patterns of truth, cannot fail to touch a heart of sensibility; but how much is the interest increased by wandering among the very scenes which witnessed them! How often did I deplore the fate of these lovers, and heave the sigh of sympathy in the Shaddock Grove, and the Valley of Bamboos! Unfortunate pair! how oft would I climb the mountain called the "Height of Discovery," and think of you! how often roam on the sea-beach, and cast my eyes to the fatal pass of St. Geran and the Isle of Amber! but when I trod the very spot where, clasped in each others' arms, they lie, faithful even in death, what a train of melancholy feelings and tender emotions was inspired in my breast! and how sensibly did my heart echo the words of St. Pierre, that "if those pure spirits still take an interest in what passes upon earth, they surely love to wander beneath the roofs of these dwellings, which are inhabited by industrious virtue, to console the poor who complain of their destiny—to cherish in the hearts of lovers the sacred flame of fidelity—to inspire a taste for the blessings of nature, the love of labour, and the dread of riches."

In this island, reside two old men, who have long had the reputation of possessing the peculiar power of discerning objects at an immense distance—a power which is supposed to receive assistance from the refractive property of the atmosphere; but they will not reveal the secret without a considerable compensation.—"It arises not from mirage, which produces the fata morgana, and other illusions, because these phenomena are supposed to be only represented when the clouds are peculiarly composed; but the nephologi (if such they may be called) of this island are said to be equally favoured, whether the welkin be overspread or perfectly cloudless." One of these persons is said to have reported the approach of the English expedition, four days before it was seen by the rest of the inhabitants; and very recently one of the old men announced that a ship with four masts

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was approaching the island: in five days after, two brigs arrived, one towing the other, which was in distress. The images of these objects, as discerned in the clouds, and which, it is said, are inverted, presented the appearance of a ship with four masts.

It was one Sunday morning, when the sea, glittering like a lake of pure gold, calm and unruffled, and bearing on her pure bosom the different barks lying at anchor in the harbour, with their ensigns hoisted in honour of the day*, that I left my hotel, and strolled leisurely towards the church of Port Louis, which rears its simple tower within a hundred paces of the Champ de Mars. My mind was occupied in comparing my native country with that in which I then was, as to scenery, culture, customs, and inhabitants; and extending my speculation to other countries, in order to discover any grounds of preference which might exist, I perceived how difficult it was to award a preference of any one country to another. How admirably, I thought, has Nature weighed in her scale the wants and conditions of all—in one country, compensating barrenness of soil, with the gift of spirit and enterprise in the hearts and habits of its people; in another, indulgently bestowing on the inhabitants rendered by climate effeminate and weak, both in mind and body, all the necessaries and even luxuries of life, without, on their part, any trouble, except that of stretching forth their hands to receive them! This reflection naturally led to the inference, that the love of one's country, as an exclusive feeling, though it has been long considered to be a sublime implantation by nature, in the breast of every mortal under heaven, is a passion unworthy to be cherished by a citizen of the world; and, assuming to myself that character, I concluded that man is as happy in Hindoostan, as in England—in Iceland, as in Ceylon; but, in the next moment, forgetting my theory, I wished to be gifted with the power of selection, in order that I might fix upon the enchanting isle in which I then sojourned, as the place of my permanent abode.

From this reverie I was aroused by the tones of the church-bell, whose call I obeyed by entering the house of prayer, already occupied by hundreds of well-dressed persons, of both sexes and all ages, including negro slaves. The sound of the bell now ceased, and the ritual of the Roman Catholic service was commenced by the priests, and interspersed with hymns chaunted by numerous choristers,

* It is usual for ships in port, to have the ensign hoisted on Sunday, from the hour of eight A. M. until sunset.

risters, to the strains of a richly-toned organ. So many persons, of different nations, colours, and distinctions, assembled to render thanks to the great Giver of all Good, was a spectacle which impressed me with a sense of the sublimity of public devotion — that great and glorious privilege, the exercise of which administers comfort to the hearts of the afflicted, and happiness to all:—here the master and his slave, the king and the peasant, are reduced to an equality, and become the members of one family, whose head is "no respecter of persons." Magnificent pictures of the crucifixion, the Virgin Mary, and the apostles, decorated the walls of the building. At the conclusion of the service, a young unmarried lady, of distinguished family, who had been selected for amiable character, as well as exquisite beauty (qualities very easily found in the Isle of France, and therefore as principles of selection by no means easy to apply), came forward, unveiled, and attired in pure white, and was conducted by her father through the church, for the purpose of receiving for the poor the donations of the charitable. She carried a superb basin of solid gold, into which poured abundant largesses from all classes; even the Caffre slave gave his sous: many gold coins were presented by the affluent, and piastres, or dollars, without number.

As I retraced my steps, reflecting on the scene I had just witnessed, I observed a young lady proceeding apparently on her way home, and followed by an elderly female, and two slaves. She wore a dress of white satin, with shoes of the same material; and, as is the custom with the ladies of the island, had her head covered with nothing but a white veil, just thin enough to admit her features to view, her glossy black hair flowing in ringlets down the left cheek. In vain I endeavoured to attract her notice, and obtain a glance from her; her eyes were rivetted on the ground before her; but there was a certain charm in the chaste dignity of her slow and measured step, which spoke in dumb eloquence to my feelings.—"Lovely creature!" I whispered to myself, "native of these bewitching shores, doubtless you are as virtuous as you seem; and if so, how happy must be the man whose fate it may be to call you his own! May you be as happy as you seem formed by Nature to make others!"

I reached the hotel, sighing for the fair stranger, yet determined

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to expel from my mind thoughts which made an inroad on my peace, without offering the least probability of relief. At the same hotel, an American captain, two Swedes, and a Frenchman, had put up; and every day, at the hour of two, we all dined together in a splendid hall, from the centre of the ceiling of which, a superb lustre was suspended. Our fare consisted of soups, turkeys, geese, fricassees, jellies, marmalades, preserves, and pasties, with French wines of the best quality; noyeau, other liqueurs, and coffee. At breakfast, coffee, and a bottle of excellent claret, were the substitutes for tea, which was out of use. For all these necessaries and luxuries, the charge was but four piastres per day; and whatever opinion I may subsequently have entertained of the pre-eminence of English over foreign fare, I was then, and still am, thoroughly convinced, that good living is not confined to England alone.

Among other French merchants to whom part of my freight was consigned, was a Monsieur Barais. This kind gentleman pressed me to make his house my home during my sojourn at Port Louis; and though I declined availing myself of his hospitable offer, he insisted on my spending my evenings with his family, whenever I felt disposed to do so. He had a wife and one daughter, both of whom, with himself, understood English, and spoke it with tolerable efficiency. This was one great inducement with me to prefer the society of this amiable family to that of others, equally importunate in their professions of friendship and esteem, my knowledge of the French language being but limited and imperfect.

At Monsieur Barais's, many young ladies would congregate, two or three evenings in the week, to form parties and plans of excursion into the woods and wilds of the interior. On these occasions, both of plan and of execution, I frequently made one of the happy party. A Caffre slave followed us with a hamper, containing refreshments. Arrived in the centre of the wood in the interior, we would repose on a verdant and mossy knoll, and observe the habits and richly variegated plumage of the feathered tribe, whose presence enhanced the beauties of the wild, enchanting scenery which greeted our sight in every direction. No gun would we carry to disturb the inmates of this terrestrial paradise, and carry death throughout its peaceful shades, nor fishing-line,

nor

nor hook. Our demeanour to each other was actuated by kind, reposing confidence, brotherly and sisterly friendship; our looks and language were those of the heart—simple, pure, and unaffected. We returned to Port Louis delighted and refreshed, with one regret alone—that our excursion was at an end.

It was at one of these parties at Monsieur Barais's, when all were as usual in the enjoyment of innocent gaiety and social mirth, that as I gazed on the happy group, I beheld among them the unknown female who had so strongly attracted my attention on the Sunday before, and whose image had, in spite of my resolves, haunted my youthful imagination ever since. My surprise and delight were unbounded, and I expressed, in terms of enthusiasm to Monsieur Barais, the admiration I felt for her, and with eagerness desired to be informed who she was. "The young lady you so much admire," replied Monsieur Barais, "has not yet attained her thirteenth year, although in appearance she is as far advanced as Europeans are at twenty-two. Her father, Monsieur Dussere, was one of the richest merchants on the island: he had indeed attained the height of prosperity, when (as is not unfrequently the case) his good fortune deserted him. The first severe shock was felt in the loss of a large ship from Bengal, which, with her rich cargo, was entirely his own. She was wrecked on the island, within his sight; every soul perished, and not a remnant of his property was saved. He afterwards speculated largely in rice, imported from Bengal; and in this undertaking lost the enormous sum of sixty thousand dollars: collecting then the still considerable remains of his once princely fortune, he deposited nearly the whole of his effects in a banking-house of the first eminence on the island, which, strange to say, broke three months afterwards. Still some little sources of wealth remained, to collect which, he was induced to go to Madagascar in person, with the intention of afterwards proceeding with his wife and children to Paris, there to live in retirement for the remainder of his days. But fate ordained otherwise: he fell a victim to poison, administered by a female slave at Madagascar, in revenge of some real or supposed grievance. The wreck of his fortune was then collected by his friends, and restored to his widow. It fortunately proved sufficient to support herself and five children—one boy and four girls, including the one you see before you. Her Christian name is Louisa Mariana; but by her friends

friends she is called Virginia, because she loves it best. When but an infant of three years old, she was kidnapped by a dealer in slaves, and concealed, during some weeks, in the interior, when she was rescued by a slave from Port Louis, who, passing accidentally through the country, saw her eating a mango, and instantly recognised her by a remarkable spot on her left eyebrow. For this service the slave received his liberty, through the influence of Monsieur Dussere, besides a reward of one thousand piastres, which had been offered in the Gazette for her recovery.—But for that circumstance," added Monsieur Barais, "she would be a slave at the present day."

From this recital of her history, as remarkable as brief, I felt more deeply interested than before; and I could not resist the inclination I felt to request of Monsieur Barais the favour to conduct me, on the following day, to the dwelling of Madame Dussere; which he kindly promised to do. I was rejoiced at his compliance; and seeing Virginia observe, with more than ordinary attention, some engravings which hung in the room, I resolved to take with me on the morrow a collection of prints which I had on board, and which I concluded would, in some measure, relieve any embarrassment I might feel in consequence of my want of proficiency in the French language. To this measure I was the more inclined, as she could neither pronounce nor understand one word of English, scarcely ever in her life having even heard it spoken.

In the morning Monsieur Barais was true to his word. On the road he cautioned me to have a care, and not to become enamoured of her—"For," added he, "Virginia is a favourite—has many suitors, and is, doubtless, engaged." I assured him that, much as I admired her, I had no other hope or object than the occasional enjoyment of her company, during the few remaining days of my stay at Port Louis.—"If you have," said he, "it will be wise in you to dispel the one and forego the other; for, recollect, if the attachment were even reciprocal, she could not leave her mother and sisters, who all dote on her—nor less does she dote on them; it would only prove a source of torment to you. Now, captain," he continued, "having cautioned you, I have done."—I had scarcely expressed my thanks for his friendly hint, when a young Englishman, who was supercargo of a ship, which arrived

arrived but a few days before from Europe, engaged Monsieur Barais's attention; his name was Smith, and accepting the proffered arm of Monsieur Barais, he proceeded with us. In a few minutes we reached a neat cottage, in a wide street in Port Louis, called the "Rue de Paris," and were conducted by three slaves into a capacious hall, the floor of which, from being kept constantly polished, was like a looking-glass, and as slippery as ice. Chairs, tables, and a sideboard, all highly polished, two sofas, with a pair of pier glasses, apparently of French manufacture, comprised its only furniture; but they were arranged with such a regard to effect, as redounded much to the credit of the fair occupants' taste. Madame Dussere, followed by Virginia, soon made her appearance, and apologised to Monsieur Barais for the absence of the rest of her family, all of whom were in the country.

Having paid our respects, I approached Virginia, and presented the pictures I had brought for her acceptance, which action was accompanied with all the expression I was master of. She accepted them, with a sweetness of manner which delighted me, and equally impressed my countryman with admiration of her. Among the prints, some from the "Belle Assemblée" seemed to rivet her particular attention; my assiduity was therefore on the wing to point out the most engaging, and seating myself on one side of her, on the sofa, Mr. Smith being on the other, and Monsieur Barais engaged in conversation with the old lady, I endeavoured, by every means in my power, which were chiefly pantomimic, to make myself understood; but, strange to say, I could not call to my recollection the word "*joli*," although I had frequent occasion to make use of it, and it was perfectly familiar to me; I was therefore obliged to substitute "*bon*:" thus, pointing to the picture presented, I said, in a soft, under-tone, fearful of displeasing—"C'est *bon*, mademoiselle;" but my fellow-countryman, perhaps thinking it a little unfair that I should monopolise this delectable "*bon*," and, doubtless, wishing to testify his own desire to please, exclaimed, as I presented a new object to her view—"BONG! *madamzel*," with a John-Bull accent, and in a tone so vulgar and so loud, that it fell like a thunder-clap upon our ears. I, however, persevered, not without some dread of my rival's overpowering "BONG!" which came with a regularity

comparable

comparable only to that of the report of a saluting eighteen-pounder. As for myself, never did mortal feel language to be more necessary, or the privation of it more cruel. But universal love has a universal language; and, at length, I was delighted to perceive (or I greatly flattered myself) from a certain expression in the eye, and from her manner, a preference in my favour: from that moment "BONG" fell perfectly harmless, and caused me no more uneasiness.

Our stay, on the first day, was rather abridged, so that, on our departure, I requested, through Monsieur Barais, permission to pay my respects the next morning, which was readily granted. My countryman and myself shook hands heartily at parting, and he sailed in a few days afterwards for Bengal. Monsieur Barais once more cautioned me to "Beware!"

I now began to study French, with a restless, indefatigable energy, but attending to the affairs of my vessel with the same activity as before. I, however, found leisure to visit Madame Dussere's every day, and soon made sufficient progress in the language to be pretty well understood by her, as also to be able to comprehend my young tutor, though with some little difficulty. It was then I felt the exquisite truth of the following lines:—

> "'Tis pleasing to be school'd in a strange tongue
> By female lips and eyes—that is, I mean,
> When both the teacher and the taught are young,
> As was the case at least where I have been;
> They smile so when one's right; and when one's wrong,
> They smile still more, and then there intervene
> Pressure of hands," &c.

It may be well supposed, that the advice of Monsieur Barais was soon and entirely forgotten; I daily drank large intoxicating draughts of love and happiness, which, however, as the period of my departure approached, were converted into a "source of torment" indeed. In vain I urged Virginia to be mine; she said, that to leave her family, friends, and country, at her tender age *, was impossible; and indeed the shore of her native island

* The females of this country are considered marriageable at thirteen, and even at twelve years of age. It is the same in most tropical climates. They do not, in appearance, wear their old age so well as Europeans, although they frequently attain the age of ninety, or even a hundred years.

island appeared even to me an almost insurmountable barrier to the accomplishment of my wishes; yet, finding myself daily growing more wretched, and dreading to leave the island without her, I redoubled my entreaties, but still in vain. On the evening preceding my departure, I bent my faltering steps to Madame Dussere's, for the purpose of taking my eternal farewell. At this interview, Virginia, approaching me with great tenderness, her eyes beaming sensibility, and full of tears, said, as well as she could by means of the little English I had taught her, supposing I could understand her better than if she spoke French—"I have determined to leave all for your sake, never to leave you, and to go with you all over the world!" At this totally unexpected change in her determination, my delight was complete, and so continued, until another obstacle presented itself, which would, I feared, again alter her resolution: her mother and sisters, with tears and loud lamentations, were kneeling at her feet, and imploring her not to leave them. It was a scene of heart-rending misery.—"Can I," I whispered to myself, as I gazed on the group before me, "consent to make this amiable family wretched? will it not be virtue—nay, even justice, to resign even the object of my most tender affection, if she cannot be gained but at the expence of the happiness of a whole family? It shall be so: I will leave Virginia, and urge her no more." Virginia, however, continued as determined to go, as at first she was reluctant. In this state of things, Monsieur Barais was sent for: He came. They adjured him to endeavour, by all the means in his power, to alter Virginia's intention; but she was immovable. Monsieur Barais then, turning to me, said—"Ah, young man, had you but adhered to my advice, this scene would never have taken place!" My feelings stopped my utterance; I could make no other reply than a slight inclination of the head. At length, finding all their measures, entreaties, and persuasives, unavailing, they yielded to necessity, dried their tears, embraced, and kissed each other, invoking blessings on the head of Virginia, and supplicating me to be faithful and kind to her.—"Here, sir," said Monsieur Barais, interpreting the mother's words, "here is Virginia; take her—she shall be yours; her mother never yet controlled her inclination, nor will she control it now." I replied in terms as appropriate as the agitation of my mind would permit;

and

and the next morning she was made mine, by the Roman Catholic form of marriage, in the church at Port Louis.

Immediately after the ceremony, I repaired on board, to superintend the fitting up of my cabin. I had it matted, and decorated in a superior manner, with pictures—a handsome pier glass—and ornamental furniture; in short, with every convenience, and indeed luxury, which it is possible to possess on ship-board. While my orders were being obeyed, I cast my eyes towards the enchanting island, and sighed at the prospect of leaving it, even accompanied by Virginia; but to have left it without her—the idea was insupportable! Every requisite preparation being finished, and my vessel ready for sea, I returned on shore, for the purpose of conducting my bride on board, and to weigh anchor immediately. On landing, the first object which attracted my notice was the person of the Jersey youth, Captain Thomson, with whom I had taken my passage from Ceylon to Bengal. I approached him with the familiarity of an old friend, and said—"Tell me, my dear Thomson, to what good or ill fortune I am to attribute the pleasure of this interview?"—He replied with congenial warmth, expressive of the pleasure he felt in seeing me, but with an averted brow, and a sigh, which came from the very "heart's core." From these indications, I judged he had met with one of those misfortunes which are incidental to his profession; nor was I mistaken in my conjecture: he had been burnt out of his ship at sea, during the voyage immediately following that which we took together, and thus lost every thing he possessed in the world. He however succeeded in obtaining another command, and then married. He next sailed for the Cape of Good Hope, and, on his passage, was wrecked on the island of Madagascar, where himself, and all his crew, were seized by the natives, and sold to slavery among different chiefs of their tribe. It was his good fortune to be redeemed, through the influence of a celebrated prince of that country, named Radama, restored to liberty, and delivered over to the English authorities, who sent him to Port Louis.—"And what do you now intend to do?" I asked.—"Do! any thing for you, if you will but take me round with you to Bengal."—"Well then," I replied, "I sympathize with your misfortunes; the liberal treatment I received from you when we sailed together has not escaped my recollection;

collection; and if you think the situation of chief officer with me for the voyage to Bengal worth your acceptance, here it is for you, with any advance of pay you may require; I sail in two hours hence." The youth of misfortune felt rejoiced at this unexpected change of circumstances, and declared it had more the appearance of romance than reality.—"Henceforth," said he, "let us never despair, even in the depths of adversity; for the wretched to-day may be happy to-morrow." He took charge the same hour, declining to receive more than twenty piastres in advance, as I had told him that my wardrobe would afford every thing necessary for himself, without any inconvenience to me. I was afterwards surprised to find that, in having acted the part of a friend to a deserving youth, I was directly benefiting myself; for my insurance from the Isle of France would have been invalid, if I had not carried a European officer.

The hour of departure now came. I repaired, with Monsieur Barais, to Madame Dussere's, and was there witness to a scene of distress, which I had not prepared myself to expect, and one not inferior in interest to that from which I had but just escaped: a group of young ladies, residing in the settlement, were kneeling round Virginia, bewailing, with her mother and family, her approaching departure, in terms of piteous and heart-rending sympathy: The poor girl was in tears, and distressed beyond the power of utterance. Her eldest sister's husband, Monsieur Dubois, who had come to Port Louis, from his residence in the country, to bid her farewell, and Monsieur Barais, were administering consolation to the old lady and the three sisters. Two palanquins were at the door; one for Virginia and her elder sister, the other for the two youngest; a third was sent for, to convey her juvenile friends, to part with whom, entwined as they were, and had been from her infancy, round her heart in love's strongest bonds, was as painful a task as to tear herself from her own family. At last I drew her, with gentleness, from the embraces of her mother, and conducted her into the palanquin, which was followed by the two others, myself, Messieurs Dubois and Barais, walking by her side. We proceeded towards my boat, which was waiting for us at the landing-place; crowds of Caffres, and poor inhabitants of the island, the aged and infirm, who knew her father in his happiest days, lined the stairs, to bid

 her

her adieu; and when she was seated in the boat, which shoved off instantly, handkerchiefs and hands waved thousands of kind wishes until we reached the vessel's side. A chair, lined with the British ensign, and fastened by a rope rove through a block on the main yard-arm, then received her; she was quickly hoisted on our deck, and I conducted her to our cabin. We then weighed and stood out to sea, and by three o'clock *p. m.*, the island bore its former resemblance to a cloud. As evening approached, I took my last farewell of an island which had been the scene of the most interesting and important circumstances of my life. As for Virginia, she was overwhelmed with grief, and could not quit the cabin, either to sigh or look a farewell.

I was now bound to Tappanooly, on the west coast of Sumatra. We were again favoured with fair and gentle gales: Thomson was a social friend, as well as a clever seaman, and relieved my mind of a great share of the responsibility. By degrees Virginia recovered her spirits, and in the course of three weeks resumed her wonted gaiety and cheerfulness. There had been wanting but this to complete my happiness. On some fine evening, while we were seated on deck, sailing pleasantly over the blue waters, and shaded from the sun's rays by an awning, she would amuse us with a song, or with entertaining anecdotes connected with her family and her fair island—for these were her favourite themes; and when she descanted on them, her eyes and features would become animated in a very remarkable manner. She would relate her adventures too; but what pleased me most was her account of the English invasion, which was to the following purport:—

"It was," she said, "a usual thing before the invasion, to hear of one or two English cruisers lying in wait off our island to pick up merchantmen or privateers: our frigates then went in pursuit. Sometimes we could distinctly hear the firing at sea, as of ships engaging; and on the occasion of a victory, the captured enemy would be brought into our port, amid general rejoicing; and on any great occasion, an illumination would take place. I had heard the English much talked of, but as I resided more generally in the country, than at Port Louis, I never had an opportunity of seeing one of your countrymen before the invasion. I was informed that the English were white men, spoke a different language, and naturally delighted in scenes of war and bloodshed; for which reason

they

they wore coats of the colour of blood—that they were averse to women, and domestic pursuits;—and that in their own country they would lead their wives, when become tired of them, with a rope round the neck, to the bazar and there sell them. In short," she continued, " I was led to believe them complete savages, and experienced an involuntary shudder at the mention of an Englishman, as of a tiger or other wild beast.

" Some months after the public rejoicings in Port Louis, in consequence of three large English ships (possibly East Indiamen) having been taken, and brought in, I was at the country-house of my eldest sister's husband, Monsieur Dubois, a pleasant cottage, situated in the Bay of the Tomb; the sea was in front, a thick wood extended on the right as far as the eye could reach; and on our left, in picturesque beauty, was a landscape of hill and dale, through which a narrow stream meandered. One evening, just after sunset, the full moon shining with great brilliancy, and the repose of nature being uninterrupted except by the noise of the distant breakers, when my sister Marie and myself were sitting in the garden with Monsieur Dubois, who was enjoying the refreshing coolness of the sea-breeze over his cigar and wine, we were accosted by one of the elders of the island, who, having placed himself by Monsieur Dubois, said—' The English are certainly fitting out an expedition to take possession of this island; they are expected here every day.'—' Do you think,' replied Monsieur Dubois, ' we are strong enough to repel the invaders?'—' I fear not,' said the elder; ' the English are a powerful enemy; whatever they undertake, they usually accomplish, by means of an overwhelming force.'—' But,' replied Monsieur Dubois, ' our governor will resort to extremities; it is certain, if he loses the island, he will have great cause to dread the resentment of Buonaparte, and he knows it; so that we may expect warm work here before long.' Then it was that I first became alarmed. At that moment, another friend, from Port Louis, joined us.—' Have you heard the news?' he said, and, without waiting for a reply, proceeded to inform us, that ' Every male upon the island was to be held in requisition for military service; the English,' added he, ' are on their way hither to invade us.' At this dire intelligence, Madame Dubois and myself bewailed our sad fates, wringing our hands, and shedding tears. My sister said—' What, alas! will become of us and our

 little

little ones? the English will murder our poor innocents!'—'No! they shall not,' said my sister's eldest boy, but six years of age, 'for we will beat them off—will we not, father?'—'Yes, my brave boy!'

"The next day, every male on the island capable of carrying arms, was enlisted; the drum and fife were now continually playing in Port Louis, where, but a few days before, nothing was to be heard but the voice of social happiness and jocund mirth. Batteries were erected; large cannon, moved from Port Louis, for the purpose of being placed in different parts of the island, produced, as they were dragged through the streets, a hollow sounding noise, of terrific portent, which, when I call it to recollection, makes me shudder, even at this day. Nothing but warfare and deeds of arms, were talked of; and many of our youth would boast how many of the invaders would fall by their hand.

"In the mean time, I was busily employed with my beloved family and juvenile friends in selecting a place of security, where we could bury in the earth, our jewels, and gold and silver ornaments; for we heard that if the English took the place, our houses would be burned, and our property either destroyed or taken from us. Accordingly we repaired to a thicket, about two miles from Port Louis, selected a spot unfrequented except by ourselves on gala days; and there, with the greatest secrecy, prepared, as the depository of our treasure, a large hole, of about the depth of two feet; and having covered it neatly with turf, we returned home.

"One night an alarum of cannon was heard; shortly afterwards, another; and at the interval of a few minutes, a third; then a fourth; so that in a little time, Port Louis was a scene of inconceivable bustle, and every male either under arms, or on the alert. It proved, however, a false alarm, having been caused by the sudden appearance of two of our own frigates in the offing, the captain of one of which had confirmed the rumour so prevalent among us—that the English were coming.

"Thus one entire month passed away, every hour of which found us in a state of dreadful anxiety, suspense, and terror. At length, the English not making their appearance, we relapsed into a state of security, and began to think they would not come at all. One evening, as two of my sisters and myself were seated by our mother, chatting together gaily, we agreed to go the following

morning to the Bay of the Tomb, on a visit to Madame Dubois; accordingly, we rose at four, our usual hour, and commenced our journey, delighted with the songs of the birds which carolled on the trees, and our spirits exhilarated by the morning air, and by the expectation of seeing our friends. We had not proceeded above a mile, before Antoinette, my elder sister, turning to me suddenly, exclaimed, 'Look! the red flag waves on yonder mount, Virginia! and Barais told me, that when the English were in sight, we should see it there; it is called the English flag.'—'O no!' I replied, 'this is only your idle fear; believe me, Antoinette, there cannot be any danger, or we should have heard the alarum cannons fire in the night; so let us proceed.' About half a mile further we had to turn the corner of a thicket; and our astonishment and terror were extreme, when we beheld extended before us, a line of French foot soldiers, and some artillery-men, drawing cannons after them with great rapidity. Shortly after, a troop of horse galloped by us; they were commanded by the governor himself.—'Retire, young ladies, immediately to your homes,' he said; 'you cannot continue your way on this road; the English are in sight, and all communication with the country is cut off.'—'Pray permit us, Sir, to proceed only as far as the Bay of the Tomb, in order to conduct our dear sister Marie back with us to Port Louis, or what will become of her?'—'I cannot listen to you,' he replied.—'Return directly!' said one of his officers in attendance, 'or you may lose your lives!' Our alarm for our beloved sister was greater than for ourselves; it was therefore with reluctance, and in deep affliction, that we retraced our steps, now with tears bewailing her fate, which we supposed inevitable, now expressing our wonder how our poor mother would support the shock. In a few minutes a French artillery soldier, carrying a letter in his hand, advanced towards us in haste, and seemed to be going to join the governor. We arrested his progress—'Pray tell us, good man, are the English indeed come?'—'They are.'—'Where then will they first land?'—'It is supposed at the Bay of the Tomb: but I am in haste—if you ascend yonder mountain, you will see them.' He then left us, and we climbed the mount. As we approached its summit, we saw the sea covered with innumerable large ships, some at anchor, some sailing about, others coming in; and further off, a host of them under a press of sail, attempting to overtake those

 in

in advance. How then did our hearts fail us! Alas! we exclaimed, what shall we do? Whither shall we fly?—and then sat down and wept.

"Just below us, on the road which led to the spot where the governor was, a detachment of foot soldiers was marching merrily to a band of music, all apparently in good spirits, laughing and joking with one another. Some female Caffre slaves then approached and told us, not to be afraid, but to go home, as they had heard that all the women were ordered to remain within doors. We accordingly returned to our mother, who in our absence having heard that the English had landed at the Bay of the Tomb, was in dreadful suspense as to the fate of Marie, and refused to be comforted. Our juvenile friends now all flocked around us, and we closely grouped ourselves together, dismay depicted on our countenances, and despair in possession of our hearts: not a word of consolation had we to offer one to another.

"Business was suspended; the shops were shut; and not a grain of rice, or a morsel of provision of any kind, could be procured. We had in the house nothing but a little dry rice, and that was soon consumed among so many. As evening approached, we sent out one of our female slaves to try to procure something. She returned in about an hour, declaring to our great mortification, that nothing whatever was to be obtained in Port Louis, nor a person to be seen, except now and then an officer, or messenger on horseback, galloping to, or from, the country. At seven o'clock, it being a moonlight night, we ventured out, and unperceived, contrived to conceal our little treasures in the place which we had prepared for them.

"Never," she continued, "shall I forget that dismal night, when the horrors of the surrounding stillness impressed our already fainting hearts with additional dread. Our imaginations presented to us, with a vividness which almost realized the scene, the English bursting in upon and killing us. Gathering clouds eclipsing the moon's light, now produced total darkness, when a fall of heavy rain took place, which continued during the greater part of the night. At intervals, the noise of distant cannon would be heard; affording us the only circumstance which we could seize upon, in order to divert our attention; and to the sound of the cannon, succeeded a silence scarcely less horrible. What were our feelings

for

for our friends and relations, who might perhaps be at that very moment weltering in their blood! such reflections made us cling more closely together; and, seated on the floor, our arms entwined round one another, we looked in vain for relief either from within or from without.

"It was not until the hour of four on the following morning, that we could close our eyelids; we then enjoyed the luxury of repose until the sun had risen, but were then disturbed by the sound of horsemen galloping through the street. The only object, however, which we could distinguish, as we peeped through an aperture of our casement, was a French dragoon officer, galloping by, and at the same time vociferating, '*Fermes vos portes.*' In about an hour he disappeared, and we then once more ventured to send out our slave with money to try to get us some provisions. Three minutes had scarcely elapsed when she returned with terror depicted on her countenance, and in a voice of deep and pitiful distress, said to my mother, 'Ah, Madame! what shall we do? The English are coming this way; they are close to us; whither shall we fly!' At this intelligence we all turned pale, and questioned her as to whether she saw them. 'Go,' she replied, 'on the *petit mountain*, and you will see them plainly.' It was then proposed to venture on the mountain (not further from us than the distance of a stone's throw), in order to ascertain the real extent of our danger; and having thrown our shawls loosely over our shoulders, we reached the summit in a few minutes. Then it was that we first beheld the English soldiers: they were at about the distance of two miles to our right; in number innumerable; and all clad in scarlet, their arms and accoutrements glittering with a glaring brightness in the sun's rays. The dreadful spectacle soon terrified us back to our homes; and when there, our terror was increased by the continued roar of cannons and musketry. This appalling noise increased as the day advanced; and hence we naturally concluded that the English were on their advance to Port Louis. The dragoon officer now again made his appearance, and, as before, vociferated as he galloped through the street, '*Fermes vos portes!*'—'*Fermes vos portes!*' In this state we continued until five o'clock in the evening, when suddenly a great number of French soldiers, as well as of naval and military officers, were seen to return in straggling parties; and we then received the

the intelligence that the governor had capitulated. Many of the French were observed to tear the insignia of their military orders from their persons—their epaulettes, side-arms, and even coats, and to throw them indignantly into the middle of the street. One was heard to exclaim, 'Thus, vain trinket, do I trample thee under foot—thee, which now but reminds me of my dishonour! This sweet island, with all its fair inhabitants, and alluring charms, is ours no longer! We leave you all, like fair and blooming lilies, to be plucked by the hands of our enemies; while we depart for ever, and seek perhaps in vain for happiness, in other and distant climes.' In the mean while, all were making eager enquiries after their respective relations; and while some had to deplore the loss of those most dear to them, others were rejoiced at the return of friends whom they scarcely expected to see again.

"The shops and bazar in Port Louis were now opened, but every countenance was marked with anguish, and a chilling dulness reigned abroad, which was in perfect unison with the great calamity with which the island had been visited. While we were busied in anxious inquiries after my sister Marie, and concerting measures to open a communication with her, by means of our slave, she, to our infinite joy, suddenly made her appearance with her children, but in a state of deplorable exhaustion and distress. The English, she informed us, had deposited the dying and the wounded in her house, and even requested, but in respectful terms, that she would afford to the sufferers her personal assistance; but the shock given to her feelings by the sight of the surrounding horrors was so great, as to deprive her of her senses for a time; and she had only that morning recovered them, and gained sufficient strength of body, and presence of mind, to make her escape with her children, and to venture, unprotected, to Port Louis. As for Monsieur Dubois, her husband, he was with the army, and for his safety she was very apprehensive, and, indeed, in a state of dreadful anxiety.—'Alas!' she would say, 'if Dubois is killed, what will become of my poor little ones—to whom can they look for support?' We mingled our tears with hers, and vied with each other in affording her and her little ones every consolation and assistance which their condition required. As soon as her slowly-returning strength would permit her to hold converse, we put to her numerous questions, especially as to the

conduct

conduct of the English: how great was our surprise to hear her say—'That the English officers, so far from being the uncouth race of savage barbarians which they had been represented to be, carried themselves towards her with the most tender and respectful behaviour; and that, considering they were enemies, she was much pleased with them, finding all of them extremely gallant, and some of them very handsome men.'

"We still remained in-doors, in a state of alarm, as we understood that the English were to enter Port Louis the following morning. While we were conversing together in a group on the floor, as is the custom in my country, and passing our opinions on the great events which had just transpired, who should enter our circle but Monsieur Dubois! Marie, already too weak, was unable to bear the shock which this unexpected pleasure occasioned, and, falling senseless, she was in a moment folded in his arms; while he—the big tears rolling down his cheeks, exclaimed —"Thank Heaven! I clasp thee, my wife, and you, my little ones, to my heart,—once more!"

"Early the next morning, it was reported, that the English were on their march into the town of Port Louis. Upon this we secured our house, as well as we could, by bolts and bars, fearing they would try to force an entrance; but in this conclusion we were most agreeably mistaken. Through a crevice in our casement, we could plainly see all, without being perceived. At six o'clock the wounded, both English and French, appeared, some carried in hammocks, others on boards; their number was considerable; and so pale and ghastly did the poor creatures look, that we all pitied them. This scene brought before our minds the sufferings of poor Marie, in being compelled to witness the agonies of the dying and bleeding objects with which her house at the Bay was literally crammed. After the wounded, followed the English soldiers, led by their officers, music playing, and colours flying; and so orderly was their march, that our fears were in a great degree allayed. The march into the town continued, excepting some very short intervals, during the whole of the day, and the greater part of the night. The next day the sepoys arrived, clad also in scarlet, and so numerous, that a considerable time elapsed before they had all passed. At length they reached the barracks, when order was once more restored in our

little

little society; the shops were opened—trade resumed its several avocations—and society its wonted gaiety; no longer were fears entertained of the English; nor indeed did we scarcely ever see an English soldier, unless when, on a Sunday evening, enjoying the music on the Champ de Mars. After a considerable period of time had been wasted, almost inevitably, in natural jealousies, and in frequent broils between the English and the French, the conduct of our conquerors was such as to win the confidence and esteem of the inhabitants in general; but as for me, such is the effect of habit, that, until I saw you, I continued to entertain an inconceivable dread of your countrymen. We at length ventured to remove our little treasures from their hiding-place, and found them in as good preservation as when we buried them."

Virginia and I had a favourable voyage to Tappanooly, enjoying together every external comfort—society, music, golden prospects, and especially young love. The objects which pleased her most were, the voracious shark in his entanglement*—the varying and iridescent hues of the dying dolphin—the shoals of bonetas and albicores, which, in countless numbers, bounded swiftly by;—the flying-fish—and the luminous appearance of the sea at night: all these were to her new objects of surprise, and her enjoyment was mine:—we were, indeed, happy!

In about seven weeks from our departure, we approached the west coast of the island of Sumatra; and when near to Tappanooly, rounded a small island, of a conical form, which rears its head about nine hundred feet above the surface of the sea; it is called "Munsular." The trees on it are decorated with leaves of an extremely small size and delicate texture, and disposed with admirable uniformity. As we approached this island from the southward, and sailed round its north-eastern extremity, a magnificent waterfall, the noise of which had caught our attention

* The shark is invariably attended by a remarkable fish, called the "pilot-fish." Two or three of this species precede his course, at the distance of a few feet, and one or two swim on each side of him. The vulgar opinion is, that they supply the deficiency of smell in the shark, and cater his food for him; in return for which services, they are received into his jaws as a place of refuge on the approach of danger. When the shark is caught, I have seen the pilot-fishes swim about, seemingly in great distress, until he is hauled up, when they disappear. They are each from eight to twelve inches in length, marked with transverse streaks of blue and a yellowish brown; and from the deck of a ship their appearance is extremely beautiful.

tion when we were some miles distant from it, suddenly burst upon our view. It takes its source at the mountain-summit of the island; it was at this time about twenty-seven feet in width, and rushed downwards to the sea, with a velocity and grandeur which so entranced us in enthusiastic admiration, as to prevent the expression of it. Its roar, as we approached nearer, became louder, and resembled continued reports from large cannon, reminding us of the truth of a remark by no means new, that the mighty scenes of nature, cause to appear insignificant and feeble, not only the highest productions of the human mind, but the mind itself, unable as it is to comprehend those scenes. Here, as in the neighbourhood of the Isle of France, the transparent clearness of the sea enabled us to distinguish, with amazing facility, the bottom, at the depth of thirty or forty feet, with its beds of coral, to a considerable extent, and the fishes sporting among them; but, on the whole, we were not now presented with so transcendently grand a spectacle as on the former occasion.

Tappanooly next opened to our view; it is a small island, about two miles distant from the main land; upon it is stationed an English resident, whose bungalow, out-houses, store-houses, the property of the East India Company, and a small Malay village, situated at its northern extremity, constitute the whole materia of the island. Between it and the main land, is formed one of the finest harbours in the world, said to be capable of containing one hundred and fifty sail of the line. In this harbour, about a quarter of a mile distant from Tappanooly, we came safe to anchor at three o'clock in the evening. The aspect of the main land is mountainous and woody, wild, and picturesque.

The natives of the island of Sumatra are Malays; and the inhabitants of its west coast are considered to be less treacherous and ferocious than those of Acheen, the Moluccas, Batavia, and other eastern settlements. Their complexion is actually yellow; being destitute of the red tinge which, with the yellow, constitutes the tawny or copper colour; their nails are dyed red: they are generally short in stature, seldom exceeding five feet eight, with noses rather flat, ears extended, cheek bones high, mouth wide, and hair long and flowing. What most strikes the attention of strangers, when considering their persons, is the admirable

formation

formation of their legs, which, being left naked, are shown to great advantage. The Malay dress consists of a vest, a robe, a mantle, a girdle (in which is fixed the crease, or dagger), and short drawers. A fine cloth is worn round the head. The chief pride of Malayan dress, is the crease; the poorest vassal wears it; and that of a pangaran, or chief, is very expensive, the sheath and handle being finely carved, and richly fillagreed with gold. The Malays are fond of imitating the English uniform; and are often seen to wear the English cocked hat, and red or blue military jacket, with pantaloons and boots. If seriously offended, they are sanguinary, cruel, and unforgiving; and nothing but revenge, will satisfy them; but if well treated, they are found to be docile, faithful, and attached domestics, and courageous followers. They have a gravity in their general demeanour, and a dignity in their step and gait, which are very imposing and remarkable: they are indolent to excess, and it is difficult to persuade them to work for money, preferring, as they all do, poverty with independence, to splendour with servitude; they have few wants, and those few, bountiful nature satisfies with little or no labour on their part. As to their religion, it appears, from what I could glean from those of the best informed among them, whom I had an opportunity of conversing with, that some of them believe in a Creator, and in a future state of reward and punishment; but they have many absurd ideas on the subject of the power of invisible spirits over their persons, fates, and actions; and the rest of their faith is a mass of paganism, superstition, and idolatry. Some of them possess great courage; and I know several instances of even true heroism. One I will adduce, being acquainted with the parties; but it would be too much to infer, that every Malay would act with equal magnanimity in the same circumstances.

A few years ago, an English officer, who was on a visit to a friend at Padang, a settlement a few miles to the southward, then in the possession of the English, but since delivered over to the Dutch, frequently observed a young and lovely Malay girl, remarkable for fairness of complexion, and exquisite beauty, pass the bungalow he resided in. He felt a violent passion for her, and by bribing a third person, at length succeeded in communicating his sufferings to her. Through the same channel, he learnt, that she was married to a Malay, with whom she lived on good

good terms. Still he could not desist from indulging the hope of one day gratifying his infatuated passion, and expended large sums in endeavouring to undermine her virtue; but she rejected his addresses with becoming fortitude. Her resistance, unfortunately, only served to add fuel to his flame; and driven, at last, to desperation, he determined to resort to any measures, however dishonourable or dangerous, rather than lose his prize. There was a Malay, of apparent respectability, whose house the officer was in the habit of frequenting: to him the seducer, in confidence, imparted the secret which had so long agitated and oppressed his bosom; and he was overjoyed to hear the Malay promise to insure him the possession of the girl, in consideration of receiving a certain sum of money. The proposal was accepted with avidity; and he was to call at the same hour on the following day: he did so, and soon found himself in a room alone with the object of his passion, who was, or pretended to be, terrified at the sight of him, and attempted to escape, but in vain. He accomplished his purpose by force, and afterwards remained with her some days, in the Malay's house, using his utmost endeavours to sooth and console, by every means in his power, his much-injured victim, who, captivated by his winning and agreeable manners, and by the costly presents he lavished upon her, became at the end of that period, not only reconciled to her ravisher, but devotedly attached to him. Thus successful, he took a bungalow, or cottage, and made his favourite the mistress of it.

In the mean time, the unfortunate husband, finding that his wife did not return to her home on the evening of the day on which she left it, made diligent search and inquiry after her; but such was the secrecy with which the whole affair was conducted, that he could make no discovery; and concluded that she had either destroyed herself, or been kidnapped for the purpose of being sold to slavery. Being fond of her to distraction, it was some time before the poor wretch could hold up his head; and it was not until a period of six weeks had elapsed, that he heard she was living openly with an English officer; the infatuation of the parties had probably rendered them carelessly secure: his astonishment was then as great, as were his conflicting feelings of jealousy and revenge, insupportable. The Englishman being rich, respectable in rank, elegant and prepossessing, both in man-

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ners and in person, of social disposition, and indeed, notwithstanding this sad falling off in his conduct, occasioned by a whirlwind of passion, a man of amiable feelings, had a host of visitors continually at his dwelling. One evening, as he was enjoying their society, enlivened by the circulating glass, intimation was brought him, by one of his attendants, that a Malay sought admission. "Who is he?" was the question. "One who bears a message from another." He repaired to his verandah, and there saw an aged Malay, who was a perfect stranger to him. The stranger bowed respectfully, and, in a firm tone, addressed him to the following purport:—"Young man, I come from my son, to tell you that he knows you possess his wife; he insists upon your restoring her to him before this time to-morrow; otherwise you will as surely be a corpse, as that you now breathe and live." The latter part of this harangue was delivered with considerable energy and animation; the old man indeed, was even seen to shed tears; and having ended, disappeared instantly, without waiting a reply. The Englishman was paralysed at this sudden and unexpected denunciation; his countenance betrayed the emotions of his heart to his friends, who soon divined the cause; and, in the absence of the girl, strongly advised him to escape with her in a ship, then on the very eve of sailing for Batavia; but he spurned the suggestion, conceiving that to yield to it would be cowardice, and passing the bottle, determined to bury care in wine. The party did not separate until a late hour, and promised to meet on the following day, to keep their friend in countenance, to cheer up his spirits, and to defend him, if necessary. After securing his chamber, with more than ordinary precaution, and placing a brace of loaded pistols, and a crease, under his pillow, he retired to rest, of course refraining from imparting to the fair partner of his bed, the fearful threat of the stranger; but his uneasiness could not escape her observation, and she employed the most winning persuasives in order to prevail upon him to reveal to her its cause.

The next morning, a Malay servant of his, whose life he had been instrumental, through Providence, in preserving, by procuring him medical aid, and affording him personal assistance under a raging fever, which ended in a delirium from which he had but recently recovered, gently tapped at his chamber door, intimating

a wish

a wish to speak to his master. The officer, suspecting treachery, went out into the verandah armed, when his servant told him, after repeated injunctions to secrecy, the breach of which, he said, would be his inevitable destruction, that there was a design on foot to murder him that night, unless the girl were sent home in the course of the day. The officer considering his servant's intimation as confirmatory of that of the old Malay, consulted with his friends, who thought it most prudent to communicate the whole affair to the English Resident, in order to obtain his advice, and, if possible, his assistance in their attempt to secure the person of the assassin. The resident, on hearing the tale, immediately dispatched officers for his apprehension, but he was nowhere to be found. That evening, like the preceding, was passed by the officer in the society of a numerous party of friends, when, about the hour of ten, information was brought that a man, whose person it was impossible to distinguish in consequence of the darkness of the night, had been seen to prowl about the premises, and on finding himself discovered, had quickly made his escape. At twelve o'clock the company broke up, and he retired to his chamber*, having satisfied himself that no stranger was in the room; and after taking, as before, extraordinary precautions to secure himself from the possibility of intrusion in the night, and, as before, placing his weapons under his pillow, he went to rest, and soon fell into a profound sleep, folded in the arms of his beauteous partner, whose bosom was his pillow. He had slept about three hours, when, on a sudden, he felt his bosom roughly pressed, and his shoulder violently shaken. He awoke, and was horror-struck to behold standing over him, a Malay, bearing in each hand a naked crease; —it was the injured husband. There is something in the very nature of guilt, which unnerves the strongest arm, and saps the resolution of the stoutest heart,—and these were the effects produced upon the Englishman: in his confusion, he forgot the pistols beneath his pillow; and before he could collect his scattered senses, the Malay, presenting the point of one crease to his bosom, while he held out the handle of another for his acceptance, said—" Friend†, arise! take this, defend yourself quickly:

I you,

* It is usual, in almost every part of Asia, to keep a lamp burning in the chamber during the night.

† The mode of salutation in use among these people, on the occasion of a hostile message, or on the onset of a contest, which is likely to end fatally to one or both of the parties.

you, or I, must now die!"—and at that instant, made a desperate lunge, which was quickly parried by the Englishman, the point of whose crease entered the fleshy part of his opponent's side. Quick as thought, a succession of lunges, or rather of transverse cuts (such as are usually made with the crease), followed. The Englishman, though an entire novice in the use of the weapon, while his opponent was a skilful adept in it, continued to parry his aims almost by miracle. During the contest, the girl succeeded in making her escape through a hole which her husband, to effect his entrance, had cut in the matting forming the sides of the bungalow: it is supposed that she fled into the interior, for she was never afterwards seen or heard of at Padang. At length, both being covered with wounds, and weak from the loss of blood, every cut, though made at random, took effect. The Englishman, now summoning all his energies, and in the hope of terminating the contest in his own favour, aimed a deadly blow at his adversary, who, in attempting to parry it, staggered, and, for a moment, threw himself off his guard. Of that moment the Englishman availed himself, and struck his crease into the Malay's shoulder, laying him prostrate at his feet, apparently dead, expecting every instant, from loss of blood, to be stretched side by side with his antagonist; he then tottered towards the door to arouse his servants, who, being all wrapt in sound sleep in the verandah, were unconscious of the scene which was passing in their master's chamber, when just as he was in the act of lifting the latch, the Malay, having recovered strength, leaped up with the fleetness of a roe, and ran him through the back. He fell; and having briefly related to his friends the particulars of the fight, he expired at eight o'clock, expressing, with his last breath, uneasiness for the girl, whose fate was uncertain;—commending the generosity and courage of his opponent, and leaving strict injunctions that he should be no further molested. The Malay, however, gave himself up to justice, was tried, found guilty of murder, and executed.

The Malay women are fair, and some of them handsome, possessing expressive dark eyes, eyebrows as regular as if pencilled, and small feet, which are esteemed a great beauty. From their known addictiveness to jealousy, however, under the dominion of which fatal passion they commonly resort to poison, to satiate their thirst of vengeance, Europeans, in general, consider it rather

rather hazardous to associate with them. I have heard Englishmen, who have spent the greater portion of their existence among these people, declare, that it is almost impossible to dissolve a connexion* once formed with a Malay female, and live, unless the dissolution be effected either by flight or by artifice. The females of Acheen, and of Java especially, are renowned for their expertness in the art of preparing poisons; and pride themselves in it: they can seal the doom of their victim prospectively, almost to an hour, even allowing a period of some months to intervene. Not only so, but when the demoniacal spirit of revenge actuates them, they will spare the life of the object of their hatred, or jealousy, for the very purpose of making it wretched by protracted torment: they can even, (and this practice is too often resorted to,) deprive him of the powers of manhood. I one day saw passing along the streets of Tappanooly, a Malay female, nearly as fair as a European, of exquisite form, of extremely delicate and sensitive exterior, and with the air and gait of a woman of education and acquirement: she wore a vest of cotton, which reached from her waist nearly down to her ancles; over this was thrown a robe of taffeta, covering her person from the shoulders to the feet, and fastened to the neck by buttons of gold. I observed to a European standing by me, that she was, to appearance, a divinity.—"Would," said he, "she were as rich in humanity and virtue, as in personal charms; but, on the contrary, she possesses the passions of a satyr, totally ungovernable. Already has she buried, within the last three years, no less than four young husbands, two of them Europeans, and it is pretty well understood how she contrived to rid herself of them. In short, it is evident to all, that they were poisoned: but, such is the subtle nature of her art, that it is impossible to bring the proof home to her, with power sufficient to convict her. She is now perhaps in pursuit of a fifth; but I think her success doubtful; for although she possesses beauty enough to attract admiration, she is too notoriously dangerous to be trusted." It would, however, be obviously unjust, so to generalize, as to brand

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* It may not be improper to observe, that a connexion with a female in the Eastern Archipelago, where the marriage tie is dispensed with, is viewed with indulgence, in consequence of the state of society, and of the scarcity of females of respectability, education, and acquirements.

the whole race with such a stigma; and every lover of the sex will naturally consider this instance as a lamentable exception.

No sooner had I brought my ship to anchor off Tappanooly, than I repaired to the dwelling of Mr. Prince, the resident, a gentleman as much and as deservedly esteemed for the amiable simplicity and engaging mildness of his manners, as he is distinguished for the able and indefatigable discharge of his public duties. I produced a letter addressed to this gentleman by my Pondicherry agents, requesting his information and assistance in the delivery of a cargo of pepper, which was consigned to me by a French merchant of Pondicherry, and was expected to have already arrived at Tappanooly; but he told me that he was totally ignorant of any such consignment having arrived on the island, or indeed of any being on its way; and that owing to the great scarcity of pepper on the coast just then, it was almost impossible to procure any. This was a severe disappointment to me; but it was amply compensated by the circumstance of a cargo of soft sugar, which had been recently left on the island by a ship, unable, from having sprung a leak at sea, to proceed on her voyage, being now for immediate sale. From recent accounts-current, received from Bengal, it appeared that the price of sugar at that place had risen, and was then extremely high; so that comparing the prime cost of the sugar at Tappanooly, with the Bengal price, I concluded that the purchase of it would be a speculation calculated to afford a more than reasonable profit, that is, according to an estimation by no means sanguine, one hundred and twenty per cent, at least. The circumstance also of my having on board the total proceeds of my various freights since I left Bengal, amounting in specie to eleven thousand three hundred and twenty dollars, and the loss which I should incur by sailing in ballast, acted as additional inducements to vest the whole of my funds in the purchase of the sugar on my own account.

This turn of fortune's wheel in my favour, threw me for a time into a transport of joy. Hard did we labour to get our vessel ready for sea with all possible expedition. In the short space of one day and night, the brig was hove down, her copper repaired, her sides fresh dammered *, and she was made altogether perfectly water-tight. I then immediately commenced taking in cargo, with all the energy which

* Dammer is a kind of vegetable pitch.

which the mind of a man furnished with the noblest stimuli to exertion—the desire of increasing the happiness of an affectionate and confiding wife, and, at the same time, of possessing riches, independence, and power, as the means of enjoyment and of doing good, is capable of exercising. While I was busied in superintending the weighing of a portion of the cargo on shore, Thomson was receiving on board the portion already weighed, and stowing it away. With respect to Virginia, her time was agreeably employed in making little excursions about the island, attended by Malay girls, her attention being much engaged in noticing its natural productions, most of which were entirely new to her, or in observing the manners and habits of the natives; and her remarks on all that she had both heard and seen, were delightfully refreshing to me after the fatigues of the day. A beautiful kid had been presented to her by a pangaran, or chief, then on a visit to the Resident; and often, when she was seated with it by her side, holding the playful little animal by a ribband, tied to its neck, did I think of Sterne's Maria, and rejoice that it was not Maria I saw before me. In the space of five days I was once more ready for sea, the cargo now my own, as well as the ship, in which "frail bark" I had ventured,—my all.

On the morning previous to our departure, we were concerned to find that our boat, the only one we had possessed, had disappeared during the night: having been fastened by a rope to the stern, we concluded it must have been stolen. We were the more chagrined at this, because there was no possibility of procuring another at Tappanooly; and to sail without one, was at least a hazardous undertaking. After bidding farewell to Mr. Prince, who kindly loaded us with presents of fruit, we set sail for Hindoostan, with a pleasant breeze in our favour. We had not however proceeded far, scarcely indeed having cleared the land, before the wind began to fall off; and a strong current setting against us, we came, as we supposed, to an anchor for the night, about two miles distant from the shore, which was lined with a formidable nest of breakers; and after paying out eight fathoms of cable, squaring the yards, and setting the watch, we retired to rest. Scarcely had the midnight hour passed, all on board being asleep, except Thomson, who had just relieved one of the secunnies on the watch, when I was awoke by the voice of the former bawling down the companion—"Captain Naufragus! Captain Naufragus! we're

 out

out at sea, sir!"—"Indeed! how can that be?" True, however, it proved. Not a vestige of land did the moon gratify our gazing eyes withal, and we concluded that our cable must have been cut by the rocky bottom. I deeply lamented losing my anchor, so soon after my boat, and directed the lascars to haul in the slack of the cable; they did so; but instead of the cable's end making its appearance, a check was felt, which prevented their getting any more in. The serang then went over the bows to ascertain the cause, and discovered the anchor suspended by the buoy-rope; it had got entangled in the fore-chains, without having reached the bottom at all; consequently, while supposing ourselves to be safe at anchor, we were, in fact, at the mercy of the winds; but fortunate it was for us the wind was not from the sea, as in that case we must of course have been blown on the rocks: as it was, I was delighted at recovering my anchor, and finding the whole property safe, as also our lives. By the next morning, we regained our situation on the coast, but the wind still failed us, and continued to fail for a whole week, so that we made but little way. At length a breeze sprang up, which wafted us onwards, sixty or seventy miles, and died away again, leaving us once more becalmed; and I began to suspect that, so far as the elements were concerned, my good fortune had deserted me. On the morning of the tenth day from our departure, I was again awakened by Thomson.—"Captain Naufragus!"—"Hulloa!"—"Here is our boat; she is come back, and is just beneath our bows."—"The deuce she is!" and true enough, there she lay, within ten yards ahead, as if expecting and waiting for us; but of her six oars, four were missing: glad enough, however, were we to see our old acquaintance, and she was soon hoisted up to her birth at the stern.

It was my custom, when we were coasting during the night, to station one lascar on each bow, and one on each gangway, for the purpose of keeping a good look-out. To keep their attention constantly awake, it was necessary for the officer of the watch (either Thomson or myself), to pass a watch-word every half-hour, which was—"*Coup daek-ougeel!*" or, "*Look out forward!*" This was immediately answered by the lascar at one gangway,—passed round forward, and concluded at the opposite one. It was amusing to hear the different voices, with the droll, unsonorous tones of these singular seamen. One night, however,

ever, when, in the absence of the moon, the stars were beautifully conspicuous in the vast expanse above—the sea quite calm, with a surface almost as unruffled as that of a mirror, and nothing to be seen but the fitful glittering of fishes' fins, reflecting the starlight—altogether forming a delightful scene for meditation, but one which, heightened as its effect was by the hour, and the reigning stillness, was apt to lull the senses, and seal the eyes in slumber, and of which indeed I myself began to feel the influence,—when, in fact, we were "*a' noddin'*," I recollected myself, and having shaken off my own slumbers, I, with the intention of arousing the lascars from theirs, bawled out, with stentorian lungs—"*Coup daek-ougeel!*"—"*Coup daek-tegh!*" was the reply, long drawn out; another—"*Coup daek-tegh!*" (still slower); but the third lascar, (poor wretch!) drawling out, in a tone of voice hardly audible—"*Coup da-ek-tegh!*" in an instant,—fell into the sea! In vain was the alarm given, and the boat lowered: he sunk into his final sleep, his bed, the ocean.

A rising breeze soon wafted us beyond Sumatra's shores, to a more northern latitude; it was the south-east trade-wind, carrying us nearly within the influence of the south-west monsoon; but we were not favoured with such propitious gales as formerly. Still our spirits being in the true vein for enjoyment, we expressed a hope, which Thomsom heartily participated, that we might never be less happy than we then were! This hope was scarcely born, when the sun setting with more than usual brilliancy, and leaving its path marked with streaks of gold, a bird hovered over our heads, and suddenly alighted on our taffrail: it was one of "Mother Cary's chickens," which by mariners are considered as harbingers of ill, and generally, of a furious storm. At a warning of this kind I did not then feel disposed to take alarm; but there were other warnings not to be slighted—the horizon to the east presented the extraordinary appearance of a black cloud in the shape of a bow, with its convex towards the sea, and which kept its singular shape and position unchanged, until nightfall. For the period too of twenty minutes after the setting of the sun, the clouds to the north-west continued of the colour of blood: but that which most attracted our observation was, to us, a remarkable phenomenon—the sea immediately around us, and as far as the eye could discern by the

 light

light of the moon, appeared, for about forty minutes, of a perfectly milk white. We were visited by two more chickens of Mother Cary, both of which sought refuge, with our first visitor, on the mainmast. We sounded, but found no bottom at a hundred fathoms: a bucket of the water was then drawn up, the surface of which was apparently covered with innumerable sparks of fire —an effect said to be caused by the animalculæ which abound in sea-water: it is at all times common, but the sparks are not in general so numerous, nor of such magnitude as were those which then presented themselves. The hand too, being dipped in the water, and immediately withdrawn, thousands of them would seem to adhere to it. A dismal hollow breeze, which, as the night drew on, howled through our rigging, and infused into us all a sombre, melancholy feeling, increased by gathering clouds, and the altogether portentous state of the atmosphere and elements, ushered in the first watch, which was to be kept by Thomson.

About eight o'clock, loud claps of thunder, each in kind resembling a screech, or the blast of a trumpet, rather than the rumbling sound of thunder in Europe, burst over our heads, and were succeeded by vivid flashes of forked lightning. We now made every necessary preparation for a storm, by striking the top-gallant-masts, with their yards, close reefing the topsails and foresail, bending the storm-staysail, and battening down the main hatch, over which two tarpaulins were nailed, for the better preservation of the cargo. We observed innumerable shoals of fishes, the motions of which appeared to be more than usually vivid and redundant.

At twelve o'clock, on my taking charge of the deck, the scene bore a character widely different from that which it presented but three hours before. We now sailed under close-reefed main-topsail, and foresail. The sea ran high; our bark laboured hard, and pitched desperately, and the waves lashed her sides with fury, and were evidently increasing in force and size. Over head nothing was to be seen but huge travelling clouds, called by sailors the "scud," which hurried onwards with the fleetness of the eagle in her flight. Now and then the moon, then in her second quarter, would shew her disc for an instant, but be quickly obscured; or a star of "paly" light, peep out, and also disappear.

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The well was sounded, but the vessel did not yet make more water than what might be expected in such a sea; we however kept the pumps going, at intervals, in order to prevent the cargo from sustaining damage. The wind now increased, and the waves rose higher: about two o'clock *a. m.* the weather maintopsail-sheet gave way; the sail then split to ribbons, and before we could clue it up, was completely blown away from the bolt-rope. The foresail was then furled, not without great difficulty, and imminent hazard to the seamen, the storm staysail alone withstanding the mighty wind, which seemed to gain strength every half-hour; while the sea, in frightful sublimity, towered to an incredible height, frequently making a complete breach over our deck.

At four *a. m.* I was relieved by Thomson, who at daylight apprised me that the maintopmast was sprung, and that the gale was increasing. Scarcely had I gone on deck, when a tremendous sea struck us a little "abaft the beam," carrying every thing before it, and washing overboard hencoops, cables, water-casks, and indeed every moveable article on the deck. Thomson, almost by miracle, escaped being lost; but having, in common with the lascars, taken the precaution to lash a rope round his waist, we were able, by its means, to extricate him from danger; at the same time the vessel made an appalling lurch, lying down on her beam-ends, in which position she remained for the space of two minutes, when the maintopmast, followed by the foretopmast, went by the board, with a dreadful crash; she then righted; and we were all immediately engaged in going aloft, and with hatchets cutting away the wreck, each of us being lashed with a rope round the waist: ropes were also fastened across the deck, in parallel lines, to hold on by; for such was the violence of the vessel's motion, that without such assistance it would have been impossible to stand. As for my Virginia, she was in her cot, hearing all that was going forward on deck,—sensible of her danger, and a prey to the apprehension of meeting a death similar to that of her prototype, and equally dreadful.

A drizzling shower now came on, and having continued for some time, was at length succeeded by heavy rain, which having been converted into sleet, was carried in flakes swiftly

along

along the tops of the towering mountains of sea; while the cold sensibly affected the already exhausted lascars, at once disinclining them from exertion, and incapacitating them from making any; some of them even sat down, like inanimate statues, with a fixed stare, and a deathlike hue upon their countenances: the most afflicting circumstance was, their being destitute of warm clothing, which they had neglected to provide themselves with, as they ought to have done, out of the four months' advance they received in Calcutta. All that I could spare was given to Thomson; but unable to endure the sight of their misery, I distributed among them many articles which I could ill spare,—sheets, shirts, and blankets; except one of the latter, which I had reserved as a provision against any further extreme of suffering which might yet await us. There was one poor lascar, a simple inoffensive youth, about nineteen, who was an object of the liveliest commisseration: he was nearly naked, and in that state had been continually drenched by the sea and rain, during the whole of the day and night; he was holding his hands up to heaven in a supplicating attitude, and shaking in an agueish fit; the tears fell in torrents down his cheeks, while he uttered his plaints in loud and piercing lamentations: unable, at last, to witness his misery any longer, I rushed down to my cabin—"Can you, Virginia, spare me this blanket, without feeling the cold too much yourself?—it is, to save the life of a fellow-creature."—"Yes, take it; but stay with me, or, under the horrors I feel, I shall die in this cabin, and alone. I know we must perish, and why not die together?" I entreated her to support herself with all the fortitude she could collect, urged the impossibility of my keeping her company, as every moment called for my assistance; and assuring her there was no real danger, I hurried on deck with the blanket, and wrapped the poor wretch in its folds. I thought he would have worshipped me! His joy and gratitude were unutterable, but not greater than the overflowing gladness of my own heart in having relieved him; and fully convinced I am, that no pleasure on earth is comparable to that of doing good, nor any reward greater than a self-approving conscience. Every moment I could seize, I hurried into the cabin; and indeed, it required my utmost exertion to support Virginia

Virginia under the surrounding terrors; she seemed to be in a state of stupefaction, and was almost fainting in despondency.

The wind now blew a complete hurricane; our vessel strained and pitched dreadfully, so that, from the violence of its motion, the oldest sailors on board were sea-sick, and, from incessant labour, and exposure to the weather, in so weak a condition, that it was with the utmost difficulty we could get them to do their duty; some prayed,—others stretched themselves resignedly along the deck, and there fell asleep, or rather into a stupor, from which it was impossible to arouse them; they seemed to be indifferent to every thing, even to their own preservation; and of all the crew, there remained but the three secunnies, Thomson, and myself, with one or two stout lascars, to work the vessel.

During the latter part of this trying period, we had nothing to serve out to the crew but flour and water; the rice, biscuit, and salt provisions, which we had reserved, being consumed, and the rest being in the ship's hold, whence it was impossible to get it, without opening the main hatches, and that would have been certain destruction. Even the flour and water, however, were useful, having kneeded them into dough, which Thomson, who had struck a light, not without great difficulty, in consequence of the tinder having got wet, contrived to warm, in a kedgeree, or earthern pot, sufficiently to make it palatable; this, with a little rum, which fortunately remained in our cabin, was offered to as many of the crew as were in a condition to partake of it; and English, Mahommedans, Portuguese, Malabars, and Mussulmans, all ate together, and swallowed the vivifying liquid in perfect harmony. The followers of the Prophet were afterwards reminded of their transgression; and their answer was, that Mahommed, when he framed his prohibition against the use of ardent spirits, did not contemplate the possibility of his votaries being placed in such a condition as that in which *they* had been.

The hurricane continued with unabated fury for the space of three days and nights; on the evening of the fourth day, it was, apparently, at its height, and about midnight a sea striking our boat, dashed it to atoms, blowing it away from its lashings, and leaving but a part of its skeleton, which we instantly cut away. The lascars had now become still more drowsy and desponding; fortunately, however, little remained for them to do, as our storm staysail was

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the only sail we had bent ever since the loss of our two topmasts, and that was blown away during the night; our main and fore yards were lowered on deck, and there was nothing left standing except the two masts, which trembled like reeds, and every minute threatened to go by the board. The well was sounded every ten minutes, and rejoiced were we to find our bark did not make any water. Not having had a sight of the sun since the commencement of the gale, it was impossible for us to keep our reckoning; but as we had been driven at the mercy of the wind, blowing from the south-east, and of the sea, running north-west, and had therefore been scudding before both, at the rapid rate of seven or eight miles an hour, for the last four days, we conjectured that we could not be far to the eastward of the Coromandel coast, and perhaps to the northward of Madras.

It was about four o'clock, on the fifth morning of the hurricane, that I ventured into my cabin, to repose myself on my cot until daylight, more with the persuasion that my presence would inspire Virginia with fresh hopes, and, in consequence, better spirits, than that the storm had in the least abated, or that the peril had become less imminent. At six, Thomson, whom I had left in charge of the deck, aroused me by bawling, in a voice necessarily raised to the highest pitch, to make itself heard amidst the howling, or rather screaming of the elements—"Naufragus!" I instantly jumped up, without waiting any specific communication, and, on reaching the deck, found the pumps at work, and was informed that we had five feet water in the hold, and that the water was gaining upon us fast, notwithstanding the pumps had been kept constantly going.—"Well," said Thomson, in a low tone, not to be heard by the crew, "we'll do our best, as long as she floats, but that cannot now be much longer—it's all over with us, depend upon it!" There was no time for argument: the pumps were now the chief object of our attention; and Thomson and myself, with the secunnies, plied them incessantly, until we were ready to drop down with fatigue. As for the lascars, they still remained lying about the deck, in a state bordering on insensibility; when, at length, being no longer able to pump, without a relief, we were obliged, as our only means of preservation, to have recourse to coercive measures, however painful to our feelings, in order to compel the lascars to assist at the pumps. After

beating

beating many of them severely with a rope's end, and thus restoring them, as it were, to life, we mustered a relief.

In a short time we found that the water brought up by the pumps bore a brownish colour, and, on tasting it, that it was sweet; so that it was evident we were pumping up the sugar, which being contained in baskets, was but ill protected against water. Such is the fondness for life, that on the appearance of any sudden or immediate cause of dissolution, any consideration unconnected with the paramount one of preservation, is set at nought; thus, although I was sensible that my valuable cargo was momentarily diminishing, and my property wasting away, I then felt no disposition to regret my loss, the powers of my mind, and the affections of my heart, being all engaged on higher objects.

Those lascars who could at all be brought to the pumps, were in so wretched and debilitated a state, as to require constant reliefs. For one day and two nights, except a few short intervals, Thomson and myself, with the secunnies, were at the pumps: at the end of that time, our hands were blistered to such a degree, that the skin having peeled off, the raw flesh appeared; our arms, thighs, and legs, were so dreadfully swelled, and our loins in such tormenting pain, as to make it impossible for us to continue the exertion, without suffering extreme agony; and nothing but the melancholy conviction that we must continue our labour, or perish, could possibly have sustained us under such hardships—hardships, however, which we had the heartfelt satisfaction to find, were so far from being useless, that on perusing the sounding-rod, when pulled up from the well (which we did under feelings of extreme anxiety and eagerness), we were convinced that the water did not gain upon us. Our spirits, however, received no encouragement from the appearance of the elements; the clouds were black and frowning, and all around still bore a threatening appearance, the hurricane indeed having rather increased than in the slightest degree abated.

The circumstance of our having on board so perishable and light a cargo as soft sugar, it is remarkable, was the very means of our preservation. Had it consisted of almost any other article, either of pepper or of dead weight, we must inevitably have perished. To have thrown overboard any heavy cargo, would, from the

the constant and heavy breaches which the sea made over us, have been impossible. Neither could the masts have been cut away for the purpose of lightening the vessel, in consequence of the imbecile condition of the crew; a recourse to so hazardous a measure would, under our circumstances, most likely have proved the cause of our destruction. As it was, from constant pumping for three days, we found our vessel as light and buoyant as a cork, and, with the exception of the baskets in which the sugar had been stowed, as empty as when I first purchased her.

Night approached, bringing with it additional horrors. The secunnies, who had hitherto borne their hardships with admirable fortitude, now began to droop, and to express a violent inclination for more rum, although as much had been given them as they could possibly bear; indeed, rum, with dough, half-baked, had formed their only sustenance during the whole period of our sufferings. As for the pumps, we were now so lightened, they did not require to be worked at all; but the greatest dread we laboured under was from the dangerous condition of the main and fore masts, that tottered to and fro, threatening to go by the board every minute. Before the hour of sunset, a large bird, called the albatross, with wings the length of four to five feet each, skimmed along the surface of the waves, close to and around us: this inspired the crew with hopes, as they supposed it to be a good omen. It remained hovering near our unfortunate wreck for some minutes, until it alighted on the waves, where it was seen riding perfectly at ease, and with the majesty of a fine large swan, now on the summit of a tremendous mountain of waters, and now in the ravines of a wide and deep abyss. At length darkness once more encompassed us around, and seemed to shut us out from even a ray of hope; the desponding few, whose senses were still left them, apparently felt with more acuteness than before, the desperation and horrors of their condition. At the hour of eight *p. m.* however, the wind suddenly changed, from south-east to south-west, and soon appeared to be dying away. At this happy circumstance, whereby a prospect of deliverance from the very depths of despair, was opened to us, the feelings manifested by the crew were as singular as they were various; some shouted for joy—some cried—others muttered prayers—while a few were still despondent, presenting wild and savage-looking features, and

seeming

seeming to regret that the billows had not swallowed them up. Virginia had been in a state of comparative inanimation for the last two days and nights, caused by her extreme terror, and the excessive motion of the vessel; she was, notwithstanding, sufficiently sensible to be attentive to, and conscious of, what was going forward on deck; and from my earnest assurances that the gale was abating, together with the knowledge she possessed of the Mahomedan and Portuguese languages, she soon found our prospects were changing for the better. She then, for the first time since the commencement of the hurricane, partook of a little of the baked dough, with a small quantity of port wine, that fortunately remained in our cabin store-room, and which soon brought on a sound sleep.

Every half-hour the gale became less violent, and the sea more tranquil; until, at four in the morning, we were all thoroughly satisfied of its termination. At daylight it blew only what the sailors call a "stiff breeze," with a sea that at any other time we should have thought a tremendous one; but, compared with what we had recently experienced, it appeared tranquil. The rain, that had continued without intermission for three days and nights, now ceased; the sun, on its rising, cheered us with a sight of its rays, which we had not beheld for six days; the sea no longer made breaches over our deck; in short, the aspect of every thing around us appeared so completely transformed, as to resemble another state of existence. Nature reassumed her beauty and her smiles—the heavens their splendour—the sea its heavenly blue, having subsided into gentle undulations, so that now all around us again bore a cheering aspect of tranquillity and beauty, excepting only our shattered bark, and on the countenances of the living objects who were to be seen on its deck;—these indeed presented a scene which, to a person unused to a sea life and storms, would be one of horror and confusion, almost appalling—a scene, of which the mind of such a person would be scarcely able to form any accurate idea. The features of all on board displayed a haggard and savage ferocity;—long unshaven beards, eyes sunk deep in their sockets, and dim through weakness, and the effects of long-continued despair;—hollow cheeks, trembling limbs, bodies bent almost double, through fatigue, cold, and hunger. This is a faithful picture of the miserable wretches who crawled upon our

deck

deck to open the main hatches when the storm had subsided, and who then fell upon the dried salt fish and biscuits, with the voracious appetites of cannibals, gorging their food in a manner disgusting to behold. Meanwhile, scarcely a word was heard to interrupt the repast; the big tear,—the convulsive gasp,—pleaded momentarily in dumb utterance, from heart to heart, the sympathy which each had in those dreadful sufferings his fellows had undergone. Before Thomson and myself touched a particle of the repast, then so great a treat to us, we repaired with some, already cooked, to Virginia; but finding her still asleep, we thought it advisable not yet to disturb her.

By an observation made when the sun was at the meridian, we found ourselves to be in latitude sixteen degrees thirty-five minutes north, and our longitude, by chronometer, gave us a few degrees to the eastward of the Coromandel Coast. I then stood on to the northward, under a gentle south-west breeze, with nothing set but our courses, my object being to fall in with the track of ships bound to Calcutta, in order to obtain assistance. In the mean time, we were actively engaged in clearing away the wreck of our masts and rigging, which had been destroyed by the storm, and in strengthening our main and foremasts, by taughtening the rigging, and setting up preventer-stays. On examining the ship's hold, we found that the cargo of sugar which we had received at Tappanooly, and stowed so close, and so high, as to touch our very beams, had been dissolved by the water which had made its way into the ship during the storm, and that it had sunk to within three feet of the vessel's bottom! even that space appeared to be filled chiefly by empty baskets only.

On the morning of the fourth day from the discontinuance of the gale, a sail was discovered, at the distance of six or seven miles to windward, standing on the same course as ourselves. We immediately hoisted the English ensign at the foremast head, with the union downwards, which is a signal of distress. The stranger no sooner observed it, than she bore down towards us, and the captain came on board. She proved to be the Mary, Captain Freeman, last from Madras, bound to Calcutta; from whom we learnt that a large ship, called the Cornwallis, from Bengal, bound to China, had been dismasted in the same gale, and was obliged to put back into Trincomalay, to undergo repair;

and

and that, fortunately, the storm had not raged with equal violence in Madras Roads, nor along any part of the Coromandel Coast. Captain Freeman immediately sent off his boat, with a note to his chief officer, who speedily returned it with a supply of lascars, rigging, masts, sails, and spars. With the assistance of these, we were soon able to get up jury topmasts and yards, and to set the sails. But what proved particularly acceptable, was a supply of fruit and preserves. These were esteemed by Virginia, who, by this time, had recovered her strength and spirits, as a delicious treat; but she more than once assured me, she never would venture to sea again. In five days a pilot schooner hove in sight, and a clever, intelligent young man, named Twisden, took charge of us. We sailed up the river Hooghly with a propitious breeze, and, without further peril, came to anchor in a few days, off the town of Calcutta, in so crippled and disabled a condition, as to attract the observation of all the crews in the surrounding shipping.

At first, I conceived the possibility of repairing my vessel; but I found the expence attending it would be as great, from the wretched condition she was in, as the purchase of a new one; I was therefore compelled, by necessity, to sell her. From the underwriters I could not recover a single rupee; and my favourite bark, that had borne me so many months, unhurt, on the wide ocean—that had weathered out as severe a hurricane, perhaps, as ever was felt at sea, and brought me back with safety, though not without loss, to Calcutta, I was compelled to send, together with my cargo, to the hammer. They both together, did not fetch me more than the sum of three thousand two hundred rupees, or four hundred pounds. This wretched pittance was barely sufficient to discharge the wages of my crew; after doing which, I found myself not possessed of more than nine hundred and sixty rupees, or a hundred and twenty pounds, in the world, so severe a reverse of fortune did I experience in so short a space of time: yet that reverse,—the loss of my cargo of sugar, was the very means of preserving my existence, and that of my crew! a remarkable feature of my calamity, which is, perhaps, almost without a parallel in the annals of adventure. I did not feel the severity of my loss of property so acutely in the midst of the hurricane, when it raged about me with its greatest fury, and

all our lives were in immediate jeopardy, as I did afterwards, on my return to Calcutta: there I reflected on my destitute condition with feelings of the liveliest regret, and almost of despair. Such is the weakness of human nature, that instead of my entertaining a feeling of gratitude for my miraculous preservation, my heart repined, and I even reproached that deliverance itself, which had restored me to land, safe, and in health, but impoverished. So little true philosophy has man, and so little sincere resignation to the Divine will in all things! Of this philosophy there is, alas! much in theory, but little in practice: it is a great deal talked of, but rarely found.

Soon after my arrival, I had selected two rooms in the Calcutta Hotel, as a temporary place of residence. One morning, Moodoosooden Chetarjee made his appearance, with a sorrowful countenance, lamenting and condoling with me in feeling language on my arrival under such untoward circumstances. The first question I asked of him was, if he knew what had become of his old master, my friend Tassit.—"Ah, my lord! my best friend, Tassit, never was better man—*Gone dead,* my lord!" The drollery of Moodoosooden's delivery, I was no stranger to, and received the announcement of my old and familiar friend's death, with feelings of bitter regret.—"Where," I asked, "is his widow and child?"—"At Lucknow, my lord."—"Well, well, Moodoosooden, we must bear all ills with fortitude during our lifetime. Come, come, take a chair—be seated: are his widow and child provided for?"—"Very well, my lord."—"Thanks to a kind Providence for that! Now, Moodoosooden, how fares the widow of my old commander, Lambert?"—"Five months, my lord, *Gone dead.*" And in answer to similar inquiries, I found that many other acquaintances had followed the same path, and all in the short period of my absence from Calcutta, which did not exceed fourteen months. I therefore began to consult with Moodoosooden, what was to be done: in an instant, however, a conviction flashed across my mind, of the fallacy of words considering the peculiarity of my case and circumstances, which rendered any suggestion of his, or exertion of my own, to recover my ruined fortune, inevitably abortive, unless I could be aided by the powerful arm of some friend, possessed of funds, or in some other way

receive

receive effectual aid. Having ordered Moodoosoodun to retire, and not to call again until sent for, I locked myself in my chamber, to reflect on my case with studious application of mind, with a view to determine the best possible course for me to pursue. One effect of my late adventures at sea had been, an almost total loss of hearing: I considered therefore, and with serious concern, that by this misfortune, a formidable barrier was raised to my ever following the sea again, professionally. The first sensation of this calamity was felt on board the East Indiaman where I received such barbarous treatment from my inveterate enemy, the second officer; and it was doubtless caused, originally, by the privations and hardships which I had then the misfortune to endure, being at a very tender age exposed without mercy to all weathers. Since that period the defect had increased, by slight, and almost imperceptible degrees; until, after the storm, it assumed so alarming a feature, as though not to debar me from the enjoyment of life, or the society of a friend, yet to prevent my ever being received as an officer on board of any ship: this line of service was therefore shut against me. Another obstacle, equally formidable in the way of my future prospects and successes, had intervened. During my absence from Calcutta, the free trade had been thrown open; and the usages and advantages of the country service had assumed an entirely new feature. The services of Europeans were no longer in demand, on account of their scarcity, as they had formerly been; for although an edict from the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company prohibited Europeans from remaining in the country without a licence, yet as many as could gain employment (and that was not a few) did accept it, without incurring the smallest risk of being sent home, or in any way interfered with, so long as they remained quiet and unobtrusive members of society, or forbore to bring themselves prominently to the notice of the local authorities.

Among other changes produced by the free trade, was a sudden and remarkable fall in the rate of freight to Europe. This fall was from £24, £26, and £30 a ton, to £19, £16, £12, and £7; at the latter of which rates it remained stationary. The pay of the commanders and officers of country ships was necessarily lowered; and India, in which a European could but a few

 months

months previous have found twenty places ready for his acceptance, and in which his proffered services would be eagerly sought for by numbers, and always on terms of liberal emolument, was now so overrun with adventurers, as to render it a matter of extreme difficulty, if not utterly impossible, for him to obtain any kind of employment, unless aided by funds of his own, or the powerful arm of an overwhelming interest.

I was not, however, to be easily cast down: I applied for employment among the wealthy connexions and respectable friends my commercial dealings had introduced me to, with persevering energy; for I had always found, that whenever my circumstances and prospects were reduced to the lowest possible ebb, even to a state little short of desperation, my spirits invariably rose in proportion. My object was now to obtain employment, either in the civil or mercantile line, or in the cultivation of indigo; but, on my trying the solidity of the professions of friendship which had been lavished on me by many very opulent friends,—one began to enumerate the great difficulty then felt of procuring employment in any way; another promised to *try* what he could do; a third told me to look in at such and such an hour, the latter end of the week; and when I did so, said, nothing could be had: a fourth assured me, with a sigh, that he was really very sorry that he could not meet my wishes; but that, if he could, he would with pleasure have done so: a fifth advised me to apply to a friend of his; and a sixth said—" Ah!—had I but known it three days ago, I could have given you the excellent situation of an examiner in the office of the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut; but that is now given away:" a seventh declared, that from the experience and knowledge of the world which I possessed, I should never want employment, telling me to call again; which I did daily, during nearly a whole month, but with no better success on the last day, than on the first; until one morning my mortification was extreme, at finding that he had suddenly departed for the upper provinces, but precisely where, I could not ascertain.

For me long to have remained in this state of indecision and inactivity, relying on the performance of empty promises, and professions of friendship, would have been madness; I therefore at once formed my determination;—which was, that I would by letter immediately remind my friend Endtfield of a request

which

which he had formerly made, that I should seek his aid and assistance whenever I needed it; and to state my object to be immediate employment. In the mean time, I purposed to seek a reclusive habitation in the interior of the country, both from the very important consideration of economy, and from the secret wish which I entertained, of associating myself freely, and without restraint, among the natives, that I might observe their manners, customs, and usages. There was also a probability of my gaining, by this means, employment in the indigo line.

My first step in furtherance of the execution of my plan, was to turn every thing which I could collect into money, by disposing of all superfluous articles I possessed. That done, and being very nearly on the eve of departure, I was surprised one evening, at the sudden appearance of my brother John! He had just arrived from England, fraught with the golden expectations with which my example and invitation inspired him, and which his youthful imagination had not failed to contemplate in terms of enthusiastic fondness and delight. These cherished fancies, however, were doomed to meet a cruel and sudden check: the pilot who boarded the ship in which he arrived, at the Sandheads, was well acquainted with my name, and equally so with my misfortunes; they had indeed gained singular notoriety in Calcutta at the time, from their severity and extent; and the first intelligence my brother received of me was, that of my having met with ruinous, and, apparently, irreparable losses;—and of my then being out of employment. This was a sad blow to the poor youth, and threw him into a fit of deep despondency, as well from commiseration of my misfortunes, as from the fatal blow which it gave to all the youthful and aspiring visions he had himself formed.

A meeting between two young and fond brothers, in India, under such, or indeed under almost any circumstances, can be but imperfectly conceived, by those who know it not from experience. Every fibre of the heart is ready to burst with the unutterable joy of brotherly love—*our* father—*our* mother—the dear land of *our* nativity, all occur to the mind at the same instant; whilst the mutual recognition of parental resemblance, with that of other branches of our family, fill the breast, as we gaze upon each other, with rapture. Thus it was with us:—we

 wept

wept and laughed, and wept and laughed again; in constant alternations of feeling,—talked all night,—nor was it until late in the morning, when nature overpowered us, and our eyelids were weighed down with fatigue, that we retired to rest.

If any of the short-lived enjoyments of this life possess a superior title to our preference, or approximate nearer to the bliss of those pure spirits who inhabit celestial worlds, it must be the delights which arise in the spring of life, from filial and fraternal love. Absent or present, this exquisite touch of nature still holds dominion over us. My infantine days were doomed to be passed away, unblessed with the parent's smile, or a brother's love:—the few hours I was allowed to be with those dear relatives, though replete with joys, were too transient to enable me to cull the permanent sweets of my close affinity to either;—but when I had grown up, and after experiencing sufferings such as I have described, found myself folding in my arms a brother, upon the far-distant shores of Hindostan, I felt, for the first time in my life, the exquisite delight of brotherly love, and I was happy!

By my brother I was made acquainted with many inportant changes that had ensued in our family during my absence. My father having quitted his farm, had retired into Wales:—my cherished and respected friend, Mr. Neunborough, had entered again into the matrimonial state, with, I understood, a lady of distinction,—represented to be very amiable. The gratification I derived from this intelligence was great, from a conviction that the step was conducive, if not necessary, to the happiness and perfect enjoyment of that excellent gentleman's declining years, for he was one, on whom—

> ——"Every god did seem to set his seal,
> To give the world assurance of a man."

Richly then he deserved to be happy; and it delighted me to hear he was so.

Providence, in its benevolence,—"tempers the wind to the shorn lamb;" and no sooner did my youthful brother find himself at liberty to accept employment, than a gentleman, who came passenger in the same ship with him from Europe, procured him an appointment in the Honourable Company's marine, on board one of the surveying ships, then under the command of the late highly-

highly-talented and enterprising officer, Captain Court. In a few days he sailed on a survey, to the coast of Pegu; and we parted with mutual benedictions, and not without tears of regret on both sides.

Bidding adieu to Calcutta, and all my friends, among others were Moodoosooden Chetarjee, and Thomson, who still remained out of employ, I hired two sets of palanquin-bearers, first having dispatched a long letter to my friend Endtfield, and commenced my journey towards Barrackpore, with Virginia, who was by my side in a separate palanquin. The road is a straight one for sixteen miles, of an imposing width, level as the surface of the sea in a dead calm, and shaded on either side with rows of trees, planted at the distance of twelve or fifteen feet from each other, without intermission the whole way. Barrackpore, since fatally celebrated on account of the recent mutiny of the sepoys, is situated on the eastern side of the river Hooghly. The Governor-General has a superb seat there, where he usually recreates from the toil and bustle attending the performance of the duties of his station at the presidency. The grounds around this retreat are laid out with infinite taste, in imitation of our parks in England, and produce a splendid effect on the eye, especially immediately after entering the gates. This park also contains a menagerie of wild beasts, birds, and quadrupeds, of oriental growth, including in it all that is rare and curious: the whole is thrown open to the inspection of European visitors. The military cantonments are in a healthy situation; and the officers' seats, or bungalows, which are separated at convenient distances from each other, present an idea of comfort to the mind, rarely associated with the tastes and prejudices of Englishmen out of their own country. There is an excellent parade, commanding a view of the river Hooghly, and where the sepoys may be seen to exercise in the mornings, about sunrise. On the whole, it is a pleasant, airy situation, and an enviable residence for an European, who wishes to enjoy the novel luxury attending a country residence in India.

Having procured boats, we crossed the Hooghly, and landed at a Danish settlement, opposite Barrackpore, named Serampore, a small, but neat and clean town; the air of which is considered to be far more salubrious than that of Calcutta; in consequence of which invalids resort thither for the benefit of their health.

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The musquitoes are there not so numerous as at Calcutta: I shall not soon forget the luxury which I enjoyed in consequence of the absence of these tormenting insects. A line of genteel houses extends in front of the river, a few yards to the rear of its banks, where, after the fiery sun has set, a most agreeable promenade may be enjoyed in perfection. It is then, that the golden asure sky,—so richly tinged,—and peculiar alone to the gorgeous east, casts a ray of dazzling splendour all around;—which, with the silent windings of the mighty Hooghly;—the alluring prospect on the opposite side of the river, of Barrackpore, with the governor's seat and grounds;—and the variously-formed native boats, of all sizes, which are seen constantly sailing up and down the river, present to the eye of a European, a motley and curiously-combined mass of subjects for speculation, and a delightful source of entertainment to the mind, rarely to be met with to such perfection in every quarter of this—"nether world," of ours.

We found house-rent and provisions nearly fifty per cent. cheaper at Serampore than Calcutta; but as we were told we should find every thing cheaper still, the farther we advanced up the country, we resolved to proceed on our journey, after a sojourn of about three days in a commodious hotel, kept by a Frenchman, named Monsieur *Darlow*. This singular character was so very irascible, as to be continually fighting, chiefly with Englishmen. In one of his contests, which were usually pugilistic, he had the ill luck to lose his right eye, and in another, the whole of his front teeth; but still he remained as untameable as the hyæna; and seldom did he leave his billiard-room when any English officers were there, without having to endure the inconvenience of a temporary loss of his other eye. On these occasions he was not idle in his execrations of the "*diable Anglais!*" in which he indulged until his recovery was complete, when he would content himself by seizing the first opportunity of having another set-to, and, in all probability, a fresh beating. His disputes usually arose from espousing the cause of Napoleon, of whom he was an ardent admirer. To me, however, he was remarkably assiduous, from the circumstance of my having a French lady for my wife; but not unfrequently would I find him beginning on his weak point—politics, and then Napoleon; and when he did so, as I knew his real temperament so well from report, I did not feel at all disposed to argue the matter.

matter. When he found I did not dispute, or contradict his rhapsodies, he was in an extacy of joy; and hugging me in his arms with all the fervour of a polar bear, declared—"I was, be Gar, de best Anglais dat he ever before see—a very proper Anglais! and dat he would give me is leetel finger," holding it up at the same time, "vit all de pleasure in de vorld!" Telling him I did not require such abundant proofs of his regard as that which he proposed, but would prefer a bottle of his claret, he immediately ran down stairs, soon returning with one under each arm, and one in each hand; the contents of which always proved so delicious, that I have sat enjoying myself very contentedly, while he began upon the achievements of Napoleon, the whole of which he used to rehearse from the beginning of his career, to the end, speaking very loud, in broken English, and with a volubility that produced an effect extremely ludicrous. To all his discourse I listened attentively, nodding occasionally a sort of affirmation, and with as much patience as if I had been in the hands of my hairdresser. At last, however, his wife supposing, from the noise he made, and guessing also from the subject of his dialogue, that he was going to fight, gently tapped at the door, and in a shrill tone of voice called out, *Monsieur D.!* These mellifluous tones no sooner saluted the sensitive ear of Monsieur, than he started, paused, and turning suddenly pale, rose up; and after apologizing for his abrupt departure, at the same time reminding me of the precise situation in which he left Napoleon, he glided quickly down stairs. I afterwards understood that he actually lived in constant terror of this lady (his wife), a little delicate Hindoo girl, and the only person in Serampore who could manage him. I was not sorry for having got rid of my troublesome companion; but reserving what remained of the wine for another occasion, I retired to rest.

At the end of three days I hired a paunchway, or boat, and prepared to proceed on our journey. The following morning we rose at seven, and after breakfast, Monsieur, with his better half, conducted us to the landing steps, and we bade adieu to Serampore, sailing up the river with a cheerful breeze in our favour, and a flood tide. No seats, or houses, are seen for many miles to diversify the flat, monotonous scenery, on the shores of the Hooghly; nor is the eye relieved by a single novelty, or attraction of any

kind,

kind, unless I except the numerous budgerows, and paunchways, passing up and down the river, and the large cargo boats, laden with silk, cotton, saltpetre, and various other articles, which are on their way to Calcutta, from the upper provinces: or, the pelicans, the eagles, the vultures, the dogs, and the swine, which were to be seen devouring contentedly together, the dead body of a native, left on the river's banks by the retreating tide. It may not perhaps be deemed superfluous to recur to a fact which has already been adverted to in the early pages of this book, viz. that when the soul of a Hindoo, of a certain cast, quits the body, and frequently even before that moment has arrived, he is consigned to the Hooghly, by being placed on the river's banks below high-water mark: there the victim of superstition is abandoned; and as the tide rises, being unable to remove himself, is drowned. Hence it follows that on the surface of this river, numbers of putrid carcases are always to be seen floating about, the ebb-tide constantly leaving some of them on its muddy banks, where they are soon devoured. This spectacle brought to my mind the following scriptural sentence:—"Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Such is the literal fact on the shores of the Hooghly; but the sight, from its frequent occurrence, grows familiar, and creates but little disgust; nor does it even excite much notice; so very great is the tendency of habit to familiarize both the eye and the mind to things which are in themselves most revolting. About twelve o'clock we reached the French settlement named Chandernagore.

Chandernagore is a small town, inferior in size and external appearance to Serampore, and does not possess the gaiety and life which are to be found in that settlement. There is however a pleasant promenade on the banks of the river; and it possesses one great recommendation, which is, that house-rent and provisions, viz. fish, rice, fruit, bread, and vegetables, are extremely cheap. Upon the whole, it is a very desirable country retreat for a European. On the following morning I went in quest of a house, and after no little trouble, met with a delightful Indian cottage, containing two halls, two bed-rooms, back and front-verandahs, cook-house, out-houses, and a large garden, in which were no less than ten peach and nectarine trees, a pummalo tree, twelve plaintain, and several other trees, all in full bearing. This cottage

was

was shaded from public view by a stately tree, having a peculiarly luxurious and rich foliage, called the areca-palm: my surprise was great to find, that the rent demanded of me, including every charge, did not exceed eight rupees per month, or twelve pounds per annum. So well did this cottage appear adapted to my taste and purpose, that I requested the landlord (who was a native of Ireland, and a pensioned branch-pilot) to keep it vacant for me a few days:—indeed, it had occurred to my mind, that a more desirable abode, and even a cheaper one, might still be procured higher up the country: we again, therefore, embarked in our paunchway, and in a few hours afterwards arrived at Chinsurah, a settlement which once belonged to the Dutch.

Chinsurah appeared less attractive even than Chandernagore; the English Resident's house, with its gardens, being the only edifice worth notice. There is, indeed, a princely mansion to the south of the town, which was built by a French general, at an expence, as is reported, of a lac* of rupees; and no sooner was it completed, than he died. From the exorbitantly high rent demanded for it, no tenant could be found; and it remained empty, until an Englishman offered eighty rupees a-month, or one hundred and twenty pounds a-year, which was immediately accepted. The great hall is, it is said, no less than one hundred and twenty feet by fifty feet, and the ceiling, which is magnificently carved, is proportionably high. The other houses in Chinsurah are usually of one floor, with a parapet on the top, where the inhabitants may enjoy a walk in the cool of the evening. As at Cochin, so here, blinds made of cane formed a substitute for Venetians, which, being secured by iron bars, against the encroachments of thieves, gave the place a dull and gloomy appearance. Hordes of wild monkeys, of a large size, were to be seen jumping in company with one another from house to house, receiving whatever was given to them; and the inhabitants, who considered their appearance as a sure sign of good luck, supplied them plentifully with rice and sweetmeats. Neither house-rent nor provisions appeared cheaper at this place than at Chandernagore.

In the evening of the day on which I arrived at Chinsurah, I was strolling along the outskirts of the town, when I was suddenly arrested by a loud shout, as of several voices, proceeding from an adjoining temple: this was succeeded by the clashing of many

* Lac—one hundred thousand.

many cymbals. Curiosity very naturally impelled my footsteps towards the place from which these noises proceeded: I even ventured inside of the building, or temple, where I beheld a mass of natives, who were, with the exception of a piece of rag fastened round their loins, in a state of complete nudity, standing in a curved line, with each a pair of cymbals in his hands: these they clashed together, in exact triple second-time; and in the intermediate space of three or four minutes, one of them advanced a few paces, and lifting his arm, pointed to the heavens, when they all uttered a loud and piercing roar, or rather yell, until the clashing of the cymbals was resumed, which rendered it impossible to discern any other sounds. A dark and fiend-like appearance marked the persons present, and a fearful gloom seemed to pervade the place into which I had incautiously entered, producing a sensation on my mind I scarcely knew how to characterize. It was awful in the extreme:—the gloom of the spacious apartment, heightened considerably by the vibrations of sound proceeding from the shouts of the natives, and the intermitting jarring of so many cymbals,—its sombre aspect,—and the periodical display of that which, to the mind of a European bystander, carries no idea but that of a senseless manifestation of uncontrolled passion, made it appear a fit receptacle for the idolatrous worshippers of gods of stone and wood. I afterwards understood that I had been in the society of some of the sect, or followers, of *Vishnu* *; and that they were then offering their devotions to an ape, under the name of Hanuman. The Abbé Dubois, speaking of the origin of this singular mode of worship, says—" The motive which induced the early idolaters of India to make the ape one of their principal divinities, was, in all probability, founded on the striking resemblance which they remarked between that animal and man, in exterior appearance and physical relations. They considered it as holding the first rank in the order of brutes, and consequently as the king of animals; and, after deifying it, they chose to perpetuate its honours, by inventing the infinite collection of fables with which their books are filled. It was with an army of apes that their great hero, Rama, conquered Lanka, or Ceylon; and the achievements of this host of satyrs, under the command of the great ape Hanuman, occupies the greater part of the Ramayana, the most celebrated of their historical

* Vide note, page 147.

torical works. The worship of this leader extends over all the territory of India, and especially amongst the followers of Vishnu; but the sect of Siva does not admit of his claim."

I quitted the place, deeply impressed with the singular scene which I had witnessed;—human beings worshipping a brute! At first I felt disposed to execrate;—then, rather to pity them; and on still deeper reflection, I could not but inwardly exclaim—"Alas! how can I justly declaim against these people, or their mode of worship? They, like me, believe that they are right: they act as I do, under the influence of education, or in obedience to precept. Like me, these heathens are the creatures of a day: the scythe of Time will soon cut them down; but they will be succeeded by others, who will tread in their footsteps, having no better rule. They all, like myself, possess affections, and powers of mind, capable of a better direction, and a higher aim. Far be it from me therefore to condemn them: let me rather hope, that the time will come, when the sublime tenets of the Christian doctrine will dispel their ignorance:—may the day be not far distant, when they will receive these blessings, by the all-potent and all-benevolent agency of my native land, destined, as it seems to be, the instrument of diffusing truth over the face of the globe, and of enlightening *all* who need instruction!"

Leaving Chinsurah, I returned to Chandernagore, and took possession of the cottage which had been kept vacant for me by its owner, as by far the most desirable spot I had met with. The simplest and most essential articles of furniture,—such as matting, chairs, tables, and a bedstead, alone formed the ornamental recommendations of its interior. Rice and curry, fish and poultry (the price of a fine fowl not exceeding fourpence), bread, with excellent butter, and vegetables, constituted our only food; and cocoa-nut milk, toddy, lemonade, and sherbet, our chief beverage. Virginia's favourite kid having died on board our brig during the storm, we purchased a goat, that supplied us with milk: the whole of our expenditure did not exceed twenty-six pounds a-year. In this retreat we led the lives of hermits; our wants never reached beyond our compound; nor would our thoughts wander to the world, unless when I was looking forward to a letter from Endtfield;—or when Virginia would heave a sigh, in recollection of her happy, native island;—a sigh, however, which was soon dispelled, and succeeded by content and happiness. In this re-

tirement

tirement I became the father of a lovely girl, my first-born child, which lived only to that age when the dawning perceptions, and endearing smiles of the infant, gave it a powerful claim on a parent's affections, and then died. This was a sad blow to us both; but to Virginia it well-nigh proved an overwhelming sorrow. This infant lies in the burying-ground of Chandernagore: no tombstone records its name;—nor is it wanted; it is registered in the fond recollections of a parent's heart. It was one evening, about six months after this melancholy event, when I strolled with Virginia through the suburbs of the town, that I found the votaries of the sanguinary deity, Maria-ama, celebrating the Doorga Poorga festival:—on this occasion thousands of natives were assembled; and many were the devotees who were on that evening whirled round and round in the air, suspended by a hook, passed through the ligatures of the back: loud were the roars of rapturous plaudits, and deafening was the noise which surrounded us: the burying-ground was close by the scene of this superstition. Virginia led me on, unawares, until I found myself in the midst of it. By her desire I conducted her to the spot where the beloved infant, which had once constituted the chief source of our mutual watchfulness and joy, lay dead. Virginia had often won my admiration by the exquisite sensibility of her maternal tenderness; but never did she appear so estimable in my eyes, as when she gently uplifted her veil with her right hand, as high as her forehead, and shading her brows, in silence moistened the infant's grave with her tears.—Leading her at length with a gentle force away, we bent our steps towards home.

Not long after this, on one of those evenings when the intense heat rendered the shady part of my verandah an enviable spot, an elderly native appeared before my gate, attired in a muslin vest, girt with a sash, a turban, and sandals. His beard, which with his mustachios, were grey, rested on his bosom. The colour of his face was a dark brown, nearly approaching to black, and marked from the forehead to the right side of the upper lip, with alternate streaks of a dead white colour, as if the natural skin had peeled off, and left the flesh bare. He rested on a silver-headed cane, apparently through weakness; and cast his weary eyes towards me, while I sat in the verandah, as if importuning permission to rest himself within my gates. I advanced towards him; and no sooner did he observe me approach, than he raised

his

his hands to his forehead in homage to me. This is the oriental style of salutation. I conducted him to the verandah, and offered him a chair, the use of which he accepted with gratitude. Being well aware it was contrary to the custom of the Hindoos to partake of any refreshment prepared by other hands than those of natives of their own persuasion, I explained to him, that my reason for not placing any thing before him, arose from the conviction that he could not partake of it consistently with the customs of his religion. He replied, with an expression of great satisfaction—"That customs are inviolable, and must not be broken; but that he was as well pleased with my explanation, as he could possibly be with the most delicious repast in the world." I was agreeably surprised to find he could speak English with singular fluency.—"Pray, my good man," said I, "of what Cast* are you?" —"I, Sahib, am a Brahman."—"Your name?"—"Kishen Doss, Sahib."—"You seem much fatigued; the natives of this country seldom venture out in the heat of the sun, such a sultry day as this; and while I feel surprised at seeing a respectable man like you exposing himself to its scorching rays, I feel pleasure in the opportunity of affording you a shelter from its effects." —"Ah, Sahib!" shaking his head despondingly, "you little know my trouble: you English are full of wisdom; you show it to great advantage in having but *one* wife, which is as much as any man can command. Now, I have got two wives; one old, and one young; but my *cross old wife* gets very jealous, and then they both fight. I think it better to endure the hot sun, that is silent, than the squalls of my two wives; so I come away."— "Do you then live near me?"—"Yes, Sahib, very near."— "And so I presume, your two wives are now settling their differences together, by themselves?"—"True, Sahib, and I hope, on my return, to find my house once more in peace."

I consoled the poor Brahman under his misfortune, by telling him, that every man must drink his portion of vexation in this world.—"Yes, but," he added, "this cross old wife is so jealous, that my once peaceful dwelling, where nothing but the chirrup

* The word *cast* is a Portuguese term, which has been adopted by Europeans in general to denote the different classes or tribes into which the people of India are divided. The most ancient partition is that which arranges them in four principal tribes: the first and most distinguished of all is that of the *Brahmans*—the second is that of the *Rajas*—the third the *Vaisya*, or *merchants*—and the last that of *Sudras*, or *cultivators*.

chirrup of the lizards on the wall was wont to be heard, is now a continual scene of strife and uproar!"—"That, Kishen Doss, is a natural result from having two wives. Women will complain, if grieved; and God, who has gifted the lion with generosity—the tiger, with treachery—the fox, with cunning—the dog, with watchfulness—and man, with a portion of each of these qualities combined in him, has also in his secret wisdom so ordained, that your old wife should be naturally jealous of the young one."—"True, Sahib, true; but (very gravely) do you suppose it is in my nature to bear it?"

In answer to this unlooked-for query, I observed, "that man was seldom afflicted beyond what he was able to bear; and I was led to conclude, from that constant and habitual mildness of manner, and gravity of deportment, for which the Brahmans were so remarkable, that they were better able to command their passions than any other race of men in India; but of that he certainly must be the best judge."

Much pleased did he seem with this compliment to the Brahmans; it opened as it were the floodgates of his soul; and that reserve which had hitherto concealed his thoughts and mind, and shaded them, as it were, entirely from human conception, was now dispelled: he afterwards conversed with wonderful freedom, and great good-nature; and on my assuring him that the utmost my ambition aspired to, was to form an intimate acquaintance with, and just conception of, the manners, customs, and opinions of the natives, but more especially those of his own cast, he promised to call upon me frequently, and give me every information I wished to possess; ending his friendly professions, and, at the same time, rising to depart, with saying, in a manner remarkably emphatic—"*This cross old wife!*" and smiling at the same time with a pair of cunning eyes, as if he was, seemingly, just then thinking of the *young* one,—he retired.

It is here proper to observe, that although polygamy is actually disallowed by Brahman jurisprudence, there are many instances of it among the great, as well as among the middling classes of that cast, and even among the poor; but it is considered to be an abuse, and in open violation of the customs of the Hindoos; among whom marriage has been always confined to two, An exception, and the only one, it appears, which occurs to this rule, is, in the event of a man's first wife, after long cohabitation,

cohabitation, being pronounced barren; a second may then be lawfully espoused.

Marriage being considered by the Brahman, or Hindoo, the greatest and most essential of all circumstances, is conducted with considerable pomp and solemnity. The girls are not older than seven, eight, or ten years; and the choice of their future husbands devolves entirely upon their parents. As soon as that important point is determined, and preliminaries of marriage are entered into, the usual ceremonies begin; a particular description of which would occupy many pages, and prove, perhaps, after all, tedious and uninteresting; but for the satisfaction of the curious English reader who may wish to peruse a minute description of them, they will find it contained in the Abbé Dubois' "People of India," which is considered the most faithful account extant of these singular people. At the conclusion of the ceremonies of the marriage, which last five days, a procession is made through the streets of the city, or village. It commonly takes place in the night, by the light of torches and fire-works. The new-married pair are seated in one palanquin, with their faces towards each other. They are both gaudily dressed out; but the bride, in particular, is generally covered with jewels and precious stones, partly the gifts of her father and father-in-law, but the greater part borrowed, or hired for the occasion. The procession moves slowly, while the relations and friends of the bride and bridegroom come out of their houses as it passes, the women hailing the new-married couple, and the men bringing with them presents of silver, fruits, sugar, and betel.* Those who receive such presents are obliged, under the like circumstances, to repay them in their turn. These marriage processions, though in a style so extremely remote from ours, are sometimes on a scale of magnificence and splendour beyond conception, and must be seen to be duly appreciated.

This ceremony being over, the young spouse is taken back to her father's house, which continues to be her principal abode until she has grown up into a state fit to discharge all the duties of matrimony. When this epoch arrives, which is called, *marriage com-*

L *plete,*

* Betel. NUT—called sopary—grows on a tree similar to the cocoa-nut; it is larger than the nutmeg, of a round, or rather flatted form: the natives of India cut it small, and mix it with fine chunam; it is then rolled in the betel leaf, and eaten. When a person presents it to another, it is the same as giving an assurance of protection while in his company.

plete, it becomes a new occasion for joy and feasting; and the greater part of the ceremonies attending the marriage are now repeated; on the conclusion of which she is conducted with great pomp to the house of her father-in-law, where she becomes accustomed to the society of her husband. Thus it will be seen, that according to European notions, no union of hearts, or sentiment, can be expected to attend the married state in India; nor indeed does the Hindoo give to such consideration a moment's reflection: the object for which he marries is not to gain an intellectual companion, to enable him the better to encounter the ills, and travel through the thorny footpaths of this life, but to get a slave, who may bear children, and be subservient to the will of her lord.

In a few days, Kishen Doss called on me again; after which he made his visits more frequent, until, at length, he came regularly three or four times a-week. Never did I feel myself better pleased with the society of any one, than of Kishen Doss. He had been, it appeared, a moonshee in the service of the honourable Company, and then enjoyed a liberal pension from them. The grand aim of my discourse was directed, to elicit his real opinion of the Deity, as well as that of the enlightened portion of his countrymen.

The Abbé Dubois says—"The Vanaprastha Brahmans, or Ascetics, being bound, by their rules, to devote a large portion of their leisure every day to the contemplation of Para-Brahma (Supreme Being), it is not surprising that they should have acquired some tolerably pure notions of the Divinity; unless, indeed, we are to suppose they derived them by direct tradition from the early patriarchs, from whom they were not extremely remote. It is only by the latter way that they can have mounted up to Melchisedeck, to Job, to Abraham, and many other celebrated personages who were near the era of the flood. 'God,' to use the words of the philosophers of India, 'is an immaterial Being, pure, and unmixed, without qualities, form, or division, the Lord and master of all things. He extends over all, sees all, knows all, directs all; without beginning, and without end. Power, strength, and gladness dwell in Him." On my first perusing the above lines in the Abbé Dubois' Work, my surprise may be well conceived, as they called to my recollection the

the precise expressions, almost word for word, made use of by Kishen Doss, in elucidation of his opinion of the Deity.

"If the Brahmans then," I asked, "entertain such sublime notions of God as those that have just escaped your lips, how is it they worship idols instead of Him? why desert the true God, to worship Brahma,—Vishnu,—Siva,—with an infinite number of others *; the followers of each idol not only worshipping stocks and stones, but what is equally degrading to humanity, brutes and reptiles?—

> '——————————Oh, that man
> (Canst thou believe it?) should so stupid grow,
> As to forsake the living God, and fall
> To worship their own work in wood and stone!"

Kishen Doss shook his head at this,—said—"That none could prove acceptable to the Para-Brahma, or the Supreme Being, but the virtuous; and that the followers of Brahma, Vishnu, or Siva, only endeavoured to approach him through them. You," he continued, "are a Christian, I am a Brahman; we both worship God differently, in form and in language; our colour and habits are different, so is our country: we travel towards heaven, as do other casts who differ from us, a different road; but at the last, we shall all meet at the same end. There are wicked men every where, as well as ignorant men; superstition abounds every where; every where there are believers and disbelievers of a God! What country is without good and evil? None. But every good Brahman, whatever may be his mode of worship, thinks of the Supreme Being as I have told you."

Notwithstanding the manner in which Kishen Doss endeavoured to gloss over the barefaced idolatry of the Hindoos, such was the impression my mind had received, from the numerous opportunities I had of witnessing the idolatrous worship practised by these people, and so glaringly absurd did their gross supersti-

tions,

* There is scarcely an object in nature, animate or inanimate, which the Hindoos do not worship; but they acknowledge three principal gods, whom they specially venerate, under the names of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. When worshipped in union, they form what is called the *Trimurti*; and they are separately adored with peculiar rites. These three have given birth to innumerable others; and the Hindoos have gone far beyond all other idolatrous nations in the number of divinities they have formed, as they reckon no less than thirty-three *koti* of gods, each koti being equal to ten millions; so that the whole number amounts to three hundred and thirty millions!

tions, and childish credulity, appear to me, the evils of which had tainted even the manners and customs of their private life, that I could not but coincide precisely with the author above quoted, who, after speaking of the lofty terms in which the Hindoo writings describe the Para-Brama, or Supreme Being, says—"But it is painful to see these sublime attributes unworthily profaned, by prostituting them to the false gods of the country; and blending them with innumerable other attributes, as ridiculous and absurd as the fables to which they are attached."

Being sensible of the antipathy of the Brahmans to discuss any religious doctrines foreign to their own peculiar faith, and especially the tenets of Christianity, I forbore to urge the matter too far with Kishen Doss, particularly as I well knew that any thing said in favour of Christianity, however obvious its truth, and however that truth might, for the moment, convince him, he would not admit it, nor allow it to have a permanent effect on his mind. In short, as the Abbé Dubois justly observes—"The miracles of the Christian religion, however extraordinary they must appear to a common understanding, are by no means so to the Hindoos: upon them they have no effect. The exploits of Joshua and of his army, and the prodigies they effected by the interposition of God, in the conquest of the land of Canaan, seem to them unworthy of notice, when compared with the achievement of their own Rama, and the miracles which attended his progress. The mighty strength of Samson dwindles into nothing, when opposed to the overwhelming energy of Bali, of Ravana *, and the giants. The resurrection of Lazarus itself is, in their eyes, an ordinary event, of which they see frequent examples in the Vishnu ceremonies."

From my general observation and experience, as well as from what fell from Kishen Doss, I am persuaded that the habits imbibed by these people from their infancy,—their veneration for ancient customs and usages,—but especially the veneration and sanctity in which the flesh of *the cow* is held among them, (which animal indeed, they deify, and worship), adheres to them so firmly, and acts upon them so powerfully, as to render any attempt at innovation odious, if not hazardous; which convinces me that the

* According to Hindoo Mythology—"The Giant Ravana, who ravished the wife of Rama, or Vishnu (personating that prince), had ten heads. The palace that he possessed in the island of Ceylon, of which he was king, was so prodigiously lofty, that the sun passed every day at noon under one of the arches."

the triumph of Christianity in those regions, will be a work of considerable time. Little progress has it yet made in India, whatever may have been said or printed in England: but even that little may prove of eminent future good. It is consolatory, however, to those who labour in the good work, and to all Christians, to know, that God's will must assuredly be done—that no obstacle can prevail against it.

By some Europeans, the Brahmans are supposed to possess, in a considerable degree, the art of divination, or fortune-telling, from inspection of the features of the face, or lines on the palms of the hands. "That power," said Kishen Doss, "is known but to God alone. There are certain wise men skilled in astrology, whom we refer to on the occasion of a marriage, or any important undertaking, for the purpose of selecting a propitious day; and to determine which, reference is made by them to certain signs of the Zodiac; or, there are certain omens that are considered unpropitious; such, for instance, as a serpent, a cat, or a fox, to cross our footpath, on the outset of a pilgrimage: we then immediately return, and defer the journey for a future day. The infallibility of these signs, as well as the power of divination, said to be possessed by Brahmans, is fully believed by my people; but," said he, "God alone can know our future fortunes; and as to the professed power of astrologers, as well as the omens of evil, both owe their credibility to darkness and superstition. What is man, Sahib? He is a poor creature;—wise, in his own conceit; but, after all, his mind cannot soar beyond its incarcerated mould of clay, which grovels on the earth, until ordained to mingle with it: it cannot explore the secrets of space, nor of futurity. Some men there are, who profess to knew the mystery of deciphering certain lines on the skull, and to be able thereby to read the fate that attended its animated state of existence on earth: it is an art that the wisest of my race believe in: but of this I will tell you more to-morrow; the sun is set,—the stars begin to twinkle,—and the cool evening's air invites me." He then retired: I was anxious to know how his "*cross old wife*" and the "young one" agreed; but being well aware the European custom of asking after one another's wives, is considered by the Brahmans the height of impertinence, I was restrained from doing so.

Before I proceed, I must first observe, what may appear perhaps to some of my readers almost needless, that the natural ten-

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dency of idolatry is to corrupt all things by absurd and ridiculous fables. Innumerable are the fables of the Hindoos, each surpassing the preceding in impossibility; and the more absurd to human imagination they appear, the more readily are they received as truth; indeed, the bent of the imagination of the people of India is such, that they can in nowise be excited, but by what is supernatural or monstrous. The following subject therefore will perhaps appear to some readers unworthy of any attention: but as there are also many to whom nothing is without interest that belongs to the manners and dispositions of an ancient people, it is with the idea that an account of some of the genuine tales in vogue among them, will prove acceptable, that I transgress a little on this subject, by giving insertion to the following; and the more so, as the validity of the art referred to by Kishen Doss, ridiculous as it may seem in the judgment of Europeans, obtains implicit credit among many of the Hindoos.

The following morning he came, with a smile beaming through his cunning eyes; and seating himself, rested one hand on his cane, and with the other he drew from beneath his vest a human skull. There is a peculiar sensation invariably produced on my mind at the sight of a skull: it is neither altogether pleasing, nor is it painful; but a mixture of both, which absorbs the eye and mind in deep attention to the object. The Brahman drew his chair close to mine, and placed the skull on the table, first requesting me, with great politeness, not to touch it, probably from a dread he entertained, that my touch might be the means of contaminating the part which his pure fingers were about to explore. He then, with the fore finger of his right hand, directed me to observe minutely certain zig-zag lines, that formed the front of the coronal suture, and which appeared to bear some trifling resemblance to the Hindoo character, more particularly to that of the Tamul. "Do you," said he, "see these lines?"—"Yes."—"They are those alluded to in my discourse of yesterday. Many learned philosophers of my cast, pretend to possess the power of deciphering these characters, which power they allege to have derived from the immediate gift of Divine Revelation; the knowledge of this mysterious art, however, is confined to a chosen few:—I once," continued Kishen Doss, "conversed with a Brahman, who professed the knowledge of it, and who told me the following tale, as relating to himself:—

THE

THE TALE OF THE SKULL.

It was frequently the custom with me, he said, to roam about the desart places contiguous to my native village, and to amuse myself by perusing the destinies of every skull that might lie exposed to my view on the earth's surface; some of which were more or less curious, as having suffered unparalleled hardships in the world, from penury or disease; while others had passed their fleeting existence, without comparatively a sigh, or single cause to weep; some again from the pinnacle of power and riches, were suddenly hurled headlong into paradise, or hell, by violent means; and few there were without some remarkable feature, that tended either to awaken reflection, or to feed my insatiable thirst for curiosity, that gained a wonderful ascendency over me, from the first moment I became skilled in the art. Three weeks had once elapsed, and no skull could I meet with: my impatience had just begun to vent itself in angry imprecations, when, lo! I beheld one just before me: it was one evening in September, on my return home from attending the festival of Gauri*. I instantly ran towards it, and perused the lines of destiny with avidity; but my astonishment was great to read as follows:—"Thy days on earth will be full of travail and sore vexation; a great wanderer wilt thou be; but nobody will care where thou goest. At thy death thy soul will enter *Satyaloka*, or the World of Truth, which is the paradise of Brahma, and is watered by the pure streams of the Ganges. There wilt thou remain in bliss for three thousand years, when thou wilt again revisit the earth in a form of a cow†.

Thy

* A festival held in honour of one of the three principal divinities of the Hindoos, named Siva Gauri, being one of the appellations of Parvati, the wife of Siva.

† The system of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, was known and received by the Hindoos from the earliest ages. It is from them that Pythagoras, when in India, is supposed to have derived his celebrated doctrine; although on his return to Greece he taught it as his own. Certain it is, that the books of the Hindoos (which appear to be more ancient than the age of Pythagoras) are filled with exhibitions of this absurd doctrine, called by them *Purwa Jauma*; and treat of it as a system coeval with their most ancient institutions, civil and religious, and established beyond all controversy. It seems to have had its origin in an intention to justify the administration of Providence in dispensing rewards and punishments, and, in general, to correct the obvious irregularities, which result from the triumph of vice, and the fall of virtue. The opinion of the Hindoos is, with respect to the wicked man who has prospered on earth, the gods have decreed, that after the present life, his soul shall become the tenant of the body of a pariah, of some voracious animal, or a creeping insect; moreover, that to be born

blind,

Thy bones (meaning the skull) will go where no other bones ever went before; after a time they will ride on the wings of the wind; but where they will alight, the Fates themselves know not." Once satisfied, he continued, I would cast the lifeless bone away; but such was the singularity of these lines, that I pondered over the skull, which I held in my hand, for hours, endeavouring, in vain, to reconcile the prediction to my understanding. At last I determined to take it home, under the persuasion that by keeping it secure from the possibility of molestation, I should be able to divine in process of time, the real meaning of the latter part of the prediction, that the skull should "ride on the wings of the wind, and alight where the Fates themselves knew not." On my way home, I plucked some of the broad leaves of a cocoa-nut tree, and wrapping it up very carefully in them, I fastened it with coir cord. My chief anxiety now was, to select a place where it could remain secure from the prying eyes of my wife. At last I resolved to enclose it in a bag, and suspend it on a hook that was fastened in the centre of the ceiling in my great hall, the sanctity of which place, no one, not even my wife, ever dared to invade. In the evening I carried my design into execution; and I gazed on the bag containing the skull as it was suspended to the centre of my ceiling, with delight; and secretly resolved in my own mind it should not be removed, at least, until the mysterious prediction relating to it was unravelled. For seven years did it remain in this secure state; at the end of which period I determined to undertake a pilgrimage to Kaśi (Benares). Previous to my departure, I assembled my wife and family, and told them that my absence would occupy a period of six months, and cautioned them to beware not to enter the great hall during the period of my pilgrimage, nor allow a human being to do so, on any account whatever. To this injunction they all bowed implicit obedience; and I left my native place for Kasi, amidst the loud wailings and lamentations of my wife and family. At the end of six months I returned.

blind, or crooked, is an indication of a life misspent in a preceding state of existence; and that, on the contrary, to be born beautiful, rich, powerful, a Brahman, or even a *cow*, is an equally clear proof of his having, when in that state, passed a pure and virtuous life. It is not until after repeated new births, joined to the practice of virtue and repentance, until the soul has been purified, and has corrected its slightest bias towards terrestrial objects, that it re-unites for ever with the divine Para-Brahma, or Supreme Being. Such continues to be the belief of the Hindoos, and, as it appears, of the generality of Asiatics at this day.

returned. It was at the hour of four in the evening I entered my gates: a dhurwan* on seeing me uttered a loud shout, and announced the joyful tidings of my arrival: my wife, who was the first to approach me, fell at my feet, and embraced them. I entered the great hall immediately; but what was my astonishment to behold that the bag, and its contents, had disappeared, and nothing remained to greet my anxious view but the bare hook! "Woman!" I said, turning to my wife, "tell me, on the pain of instant death," as I seized her by the throat, "who—who has invaded this sanctuary in my absence? What has become of the bag, with its contents, that I gave thee such strict charge to preserve? Tell me, I say, trembling wretch!" shaking her, for my indignation knew no bounds. My wife, kneeling at my feet, supplicated, in tears and with uplifted hands, my forgiveness for her commission of the worst of crimes—disobedience to her husband's commands.—"I could not," she said, "suppress the curiosity I felt to discover what the bag contained. The second week after your departure, I had a ladder fixed to the ceiling, and on ascending it, I opened the bag, and eagerly examined its contents: my horror on seeing a human skull was extreme; but my curiosity was no sooner appeased on this point, than I felt a burning desire to know the reason of its being placed there. For a long time my mind was in a state of turbulence and anxiety to divine this remaining mystery, as well in doubt whether I should replace it, or keep it by me, and candidly confess my weakness to you on your return. At length I consulted a learned guru† of our village, as to the meaning of the skull being suspended to the ceiling, also with regard to its ultimate disposal. He assured me that it was the skull of a fiend, which, in its animate state, had wandered over the earth in human form;—that unless it was instantly destroyed, and every particle of it ground, even to powder, you would be afflicted with sore calamity, and never return home. I paid the guru six rupees, and ground the odious skull instantly, to powder, and it being a stormy day, I cast it from the top of our house into the air, that not a particle of it might pollute our compound. Now," added she, "I have confessed all I know; nobody is in fault but myself; and attribute it, I pray, to my sex's weakness, or my love for you, and forgive me!" Casting her from me, and commanding

* A door keeper.

† A Hindoo priest.

ing her to leave my presence, I reflected in silence, and not without wonder, on the thorough fulfilment of the latter part of the prediction;—on the singularity of events, that sometimes prove instrumental in carrying the decrees of fate into execution;—and how totally impossible, as well as vain it is, in man, to attempt to reverse them.

Kishen Doss ended. I thanked him for his tale; but expressed my astonishment that the sense of man could be so debased, as to give credence to the real existence of any such art; but on further conversation, it appeared that the Brahmans, who professed the practice of it, were in the habit of selling it to those who were dupes enough to pay handsomely to be initiated, as they supposed, into its mysteries. This circumstance, among many others, which did not escape my notice, impressed me with the justice of observations contained in the pages of many eminent writers on India,—that if half the superstitious fables and idolatrous customs prevalent in the East, were traced to their proper source, they would appear to be set on foot, and nurtured by the self-interest and gratification of crafty Brahmans, and gurus or priests of the country.

Kishen Doss was passionately fond of listening to European anecdotes; and to indulge him, I would relate a variety: but I found none pleased him so well as those decked out in the Eastern style of the marvellous, or calculated to excite sudden astonishment, surprise, or laughter; no matter how improbable the incidents, fiction being frequently so familiarised to the mind of an Asiatic, as to be received with as great pleasure as truth. He in his turn would favour me with a relation of Eastern tales, two of which I will insert, as well for the entertainment of my readers, as to offer a characteristical specimen of the general taste that pervades them all. The first, which he represented as a maritime tale in vogue among Mahommedans and Asiatic-Portuguese, was entitled as follows:—

THE TALE OF THE SAILOR OF ALL-WORK*.

A captain of a ship lying in Muscat Roads, was in a great hurry to procure sailors, in order to proceed to sea immediately. As he

* The literal expression made use of by Kishen Doss, was the sailor of "handy-work:" but the better to accommodate the title to the English reader, I have altered it to the sailor of "*All*-work."

he offered a liberal bounty, plenty of Mahommedans came on board to offer their services.—"Well," said the captain to one of them, "what pay do you want, my man?"—"Six rupees a-month, Sahib."—"Very well; pass on.—And you?" speaking to another.—"Five rupees, Sahib."—"Good again; pass on.—And you?" to a third.—"Four rupees, Sahib."—"Pass on.—And, my man," speaking to a careful-looking Mahommedan, who advanced, wrapped in an enormous woollen great-coat, "how much do you want?"—"Twenty-three rupees per month, Sahib."—"Light of my eyes!" said the captain, "twenty-three rupees a-month! what for?"—"What for, Sahib!" replied the man; "because—I'm a sailor of all-work."—"A sailor of all-work! By the power of Mahommed! what's that?"—"Oh!" replied the man, with a peculiar archness, that conveyed more to the mind of the captain than ten thousand words, "you'll see!" —"Well, pass on, sailor of all-work!" His crew being shortly after completed, he proceeded to sea.

Scarcely had they cleared the land, and pursued their course through the deep waters, when a dreadful storm arose, in the midst of which every sailor on board was actively engaged in necessary duty,—but the sailor of all-work; who could not be prevailed upon to go aloft, or indeed, do any thing but eat and drink, which he did very heartily. At length, by the assistance of severe blows with a rope's-end, he was forced, greatly against his will, to go aloft. Night came on, and with it, all the horrors of the storm, when the sailor of all-work, not at all relishing his situation, cast his enormous woollen great-coat into the sea, and slid down, unperceived, by one of the back-stays. Having reached the deck, he crawled into the captain's store-room, where he lay concealed, and in perfect ease; abundance of Shiraz wine, dates, biscuit, butter, and, in short, every dainty, awaiting his touch, with all of which indeed he made himself sociably free, until he fell into a sound sleep.

The moment the sailors saw the enormous woollen coat fall into the sea, they one and all, supposing it to be their shipmate, bawled out to the captain on deck—"*The sailor of all-work's fell overboard!*" and after the lapse of a few days, during which time the sailors were frequently occupied in scanning the cha-

racter

racter of their eccentric shipmate, and lamenting his untimely end, he was totally forgotten.

In a few weeks the ship arrived in sight of Bombay. They were sailing with a fair breeze for the harbour, when, all at once, a voice was heard to cry for, *help!* but nobody could tell from whence it came. Search was made around the ship, and in every direction, but in vain; still the voice continued its cry, louder and louder, until it rivetted the attention of the whole crew. One of the sailors said, he thought it proceeded from the stern. Thither they all ran, headed by their captain: but great was their astonishment, on casting their eyes towards the rudder, to behold, the sailor of all-work! who was observed swimming with one hand, holding on by the rudder chains with the other, and puffing, blowing, spouting, and flouncing about, as if drowning—"Oh, you unfeeling monsters!" he exclaimed, in a half-choked, and apparently exhausted utterance—"oh, you demons! here—here—have—I been—swimming after—the ship—all—the way—oh! from Muscat! and you wont—pick—me up! Oh, you—wretches!—Help! captain, help!" The crew, by the direction of the captain, speedily got a rope, and pulled him up like a big fish, marvelling greatly,—making much of him,—and assuring him (which was very true) that they never heard him cry out before, and wondering at his amazing prowess, in swimming so far as he had done: As for the captain, he determined not to part with him.

The ship had not been many days at anchor in the harbour of Bombay, when a Parsee merchant, who dined with the captain, boasted of his singular expertness at every branch of skill which formed the topic of discourse. Among other extraordinary freaks his predilection for boasting led him to declare himself a thorough adept in, was that of swimming and diving; in short, he declared that he could swim, or remain under water, longer than any other man in Asia.—"That," said the captain, "I must be allowed to dispute with you, being ready to back a sailor of mine against any man in the universe at diving or swimming; in fact," said the captain, "he swam after me very nearly all the way from Muscat!"—"You!" said the Parsee merchant, in an impassioned tone, and gesture of defiance—"you doubt my word! I'll dive with you for fifty thousand rupees, or with any

sailor

sailor you can produce, or with any man on earth!"—"That is a sum," said the captain, "I am too poor to stake upon a venture; but if you choose to make it ten thousand rupees, I am ready to advance the stakes, if you are."—"Agreed!" rejoined the merchant. Umpires were then appointed, agreements drawn out, and the morning of that day fortnight was fixed upon for the trial.

The projected wager having formed the chief topic of conversation in the town of Bombay, a vast concourse of people assembled from all quarters early on the morning appointed, to witness the feat. Some predicted, that the love of conquest, or desire of gain, would certainly prove the destruction of one of the parties: others again, thought the Parsee would win; while the majority were of opinion that a shark would, most probably, get hold of both of them.

Precisely at the hour of seven, the Parsee merchant made his appearance, and was instantaneously hailed with deafening acclamations from the surrounding multitude. He wore a rich turban, fringed with gold. Over his shoulders, a fold of plain calico, bordered with silver lace, partly concealed a superb diving suit, which had been dipped in a magician's caldron, containing a mysterious liquid, calculated to render the wearer of it, "invincible in war, and victorious in contest." This precious suit was decked with a profusion of diamonds, and massy clasps of pearl and gold, of so rare a workmanship, as to amaze and delight the eye of every beholder. Three vassals, following him, bore the amount of his stakes, ten thousand rupees; and delivered the sum over to the umpires, who were natives of Bombay, of high rank, and were seated under a splendid canopy, made of sandal wood, erected expressly for the occasion. In a few minutes, the captain was seen to advance, who likewise delivered over the amount of his stakes to the umpires. All now were waiting with impatience for the sailor of all-work. At last, a universal shout announced his appearance at the summit of a small hillock he had to surmount, ere he reached the beach. These plaudits, however, soon gave way to emotions of another kind—intense curiosity; for he was observed pulling after him, to the astonishment of all, and with indefatigable earnestness, a large bag, containing apparently some heavy substance. Every eye was fixed upon him, until he reach-

ed

ed the beach, when he threw the bag at the umpires feet. —"What is this?" said the Parsee merchant. "What is it?" said the sailor of all-work, with a surly look; "rice."—"Rice!" said the astonished merchant—"What for?"—"What for!" replied the sailor of all-work, with a look of ineffable contempt at his adversary; "to *eat*, certainly!" At this a loud laugh proceeded from every side: the sailor of all-work however advanced to the umpires, and after telling them that he—"engaged to dive for a wager, it was true, and dive he would; but that he did not contemplate the idea of remaining under water without any thing to eat:"—he disappeared.

Various were the expressions of astonishment, occasioned by his determination to remain so long under water as to consume a bag of rice, gave rise to: but they were not kept long in suspense, for he again appeared, with a sack of dates, two jars full of Shiraz wine, and some mangoe jelly.—"Now," said he, "I shall soon be ready for you!" and again disappeared. In his absence, the Parsee merchant wished much to be allowed to scrutinize the contents of the bag, but was not permitted by the umpires. Loud and repeated plaudits now announced the re-appearance of the sailor of all-work: but, once more, the multitude were doomed to suspend their greetings, to gaze in silent astonishment, not unmixed with the liveliest curiosity, at the sailor of all-work, who was observed to advance before six lusty fellows, bearing on their shoulders an enormous anchor and cable. After the various expressions of surprise occasioned by this unaccountable appearance had subsided, the umpires themselves could not restrain their inquisitiveness, who, with the captain, and the astonished Parsee merchant, flocked round the sailor of all-work, surrounded by an amazing concourse of people, all anxious to ascertain the intent of these ominous preparations; but particularly of the anchor and cable. "As for my provisions," said the sailor of all-work, "I have already told you for what purpose they are intended: the anchor and cable," turning to the merchant, "is to bring us safe to anchor at the bottom; and to keep us comfortable there, until our stock of provisions are consumed."—"What!" said the Parsee merchant, who by this time was half crazy with apprehension and surprise—"what! come to an anchor at the bottom! and eat and drink there! By the power of Mahommed! not I!—Now,

now,

now, do I perceive your design, caitiff! Thou art a magician; if not, the devil himself; and wantest to sacrifice me at the bottom of the ocean; but thanks to Mahommed! I am preserved from thy clutches, and the fury of the fiends:" So saying, he advanced a few steps, in order to appeal to the umpires: but the surrounding populace deeming his intention as a mere evasion, or, at the best, a pretext to avoid the trial of skill they had all assembled to witness, hailed him with deafening yells and hootings, and were just as liberal in their applause on the sailor of all-work; multitudes ringing the air with shouts of—"Well done, the sailor of all-work!" Meanwhile, the merchant, who was, and not without reason, apprehensive for his own safety, contrived to make his escape, amidst the dire confusion and uproar that surrounded him. This was no sooner ascertained, than the sailor of all-work was again hailed with universal acclamation; and the stakes, by the edict of the umpires, were delivered into the captain's hands, as justly forfeited; who, in gratitude to the sailor of all-work, increased his pay from twenty-five, to fifty rupees a-month. Nor did his bounty end here: on his arrival in Persia, he presented him with a cottage, situated in the suburbs of the famed city of Teheran, which was the native village of the sailor of all-work. It is said he lives there to this day,—exciting the wonder and admiration of the curious, who flock round his dwelling in breathless anxiety to gain a sight of him, and listen, with avidity, to his description of the mysteries he observed in the inscrutable depths, and his marvellous exploits therein.

So much for the "Sailor of All-work." We now come to the second tale; which is one of the many held in general estimation by the Hindoos. It attracted my peculiar notice, from the circumstance of my hearing being impaired; and I may not perhaps erroneously conclude, that this consideration induced Kishen Dass, as well as other "wise men of the East," to introduce the tale with greater frequency than others to my especial observance. I was agreeably surprised, as well as pleased, therefore, to read the tale (although with considerable variations) in the Abbé Dubois' "People of India." He relates it as follows, and as I cannot hope to give a better version, I shall insert it in his own style.

TALE

TALE OF THE FOUR DEAF INDIANS.

A deaf shepherd was one day tending his flock, near his own village; and though it was almost noon, his wife had not yet brought him his breakfast. He was afraid to leave his sheep to go in guest of it, lest some accident should befall them. But his hunger could not be appeased; and upon looking round, he spied a *Talaiyari*, or village hind, who had come to cut grass for his cow, near a neighbouring spring. He went to call him, though very reluctantly, because he knew that, though those servants of the village are set as watchmen to prevent theft, yet they are great thieves themselves. He hailed him, however, and requested him just to give an eye to his flock, for the short time he should be absent, and that he would not forget him when he returned from breakfast; but the man was as deaf as himself, and mistaking his intentions, he angrily asked the shepherd—"What right have you to take this grass, which I have had the trouble to cut? Go about thy business, and let me alone!" The deaf shepherd observed the repulsive gesture of the hind, which he took for a signal of acquiescence in his request, and therefore briskly ran towards the village, fully determined to give his wife a good lesson for her neglect. But when he approached his house, he saw her before the door, rolling in the pains of a violent cholic, brought on by eating, over night, too great a quantity of raw green pease. Her sad condition, and the necessity he was under to provide breakfast for himself, detained the shepherd longer than he wished; while the small confidence he had in the person with whom he left his sheep, accelerated his return to the utmost.

Overjoyed to see his flock peaceably feeding near the spot where he left them, he counted them over; and finding that there was not a single sheep missing, "He is an honest fellow," quoth he, "this *Talaiyari*, the very jewel of his race! I promised him a reward, and he shall have it." There was a lame beast in the flock, well enough in other respects, which he hoisted on his shoulders, and carried to the place where the hind was, and courteously offered him the mutton, saying—"You have taken great care of my sheep during my absence—take this one for your trouble.

"I,"

"I," says the deaf hind—"I break your sheep's leg! I'll be hanged if I went near your flock since you have been gone, or stirred from the place where I now am."—"Yes," said the shepherd, "it is good and fat mutton, and will be a treat to you and your family, or friends."—"Have I not told thee," replied the Talaiyari, in a rage, "that I never went near thy sheep; and yet thou wilt accuse me of breaking that one's leg. Get about thy business, or I will give thee a good beating!" And, by his gestures, he seemed determined to put his threats in execution. The astonished shepherd got into a passion also, and assumed a posture of defiance. They were just proceeding to blows, when a man on horseback came up. To him they both appealed, to decide the dispute between them; and the shepherd, laying hold of the bridle, requested the horseman to alight just for a moment, and to settle the difference between him and the beggarly Talaiyari.—"I have offered him a present of a sheep," says he, "because I thought he had done me a service; and, in requital, he will knock me down." The villager was at the same time preferring his complaint, that the shepherd would accuse him of breaking the leg of his sheep, when he had never been near his flock.

The horseman, to whom they both appealed, happened to be as deaf as they, and did not understand a word that either of them said. But, seeing them both addressing him with vehemence, he made a sign to them to listen to him, and then frankly told them that he confessed the horse he rode was not his own: "It was a stray that I found on the road," quoth he, "and being at a loss, I mounted him for the sake of expedition. If he be yours, take him; if not, pray let me proceed, as I am really in great haste."

The shepherd and the village hind, each imagining that the horseman had decided in favour of the other, became more violent than ever; both cursing him, whom they had taken for their judge, and accusing him of partiality.

At this crisis, there happened to come up an aged Brahman: instantly they all crowded round him—shepherd, Talaiyari, and horseman; each claiming his interposition, and a decision in his favour. All spoke together, every one telling his own tale. But the Brahman had lost his hearing also.—"I know," said he,

"you

"you want to compel me to return home to her (meaning his wife); but do you know her character? In all the legions of the devils, I defy you to find one that is her equal in wickedness. Since the time I first bought her, she has made me commit more sin than it will be in my power to expiate in thirty generations. I am going on a pilgrimage to Kasi (Benares), where I will wash myself from the innumerable crimes I have been led into, from the hour in which I had the misfortune to make her my wife. Then will I wear out the rest of my days on alms, in a strange land."

While they were all four venting their exclamations, without hearing a word, the horsestealer perceived some people advancing toward them with great speed. Fearing they might be the owners of the beast, he dismounted, and took to his heels. The shepherd, seeing it was growing late, went to look after his flock, pouring out curses, as he trudged, against all arbitrators, and bitterly complaining, that all justice had departed from the earth. Then he bethought himself of a snake, that crossed his path in the morning, as he came out of the sheepfold, and which might account for the troubles he had that day experienced. The talaiyari returned to his load of grass, and finding the lame sheep there, he took it on his shoulder, to punish the shepherd for the vexation he had given him: and the aged Brahman pursued his course to a choultry, that was not far off; a quiet night and sound sleep soothed his anger in part—and, early in the morning, several Brahmans, his relations and neighbours, who had traced him out, persuaded him to return home, promising to engage his wife to be more obedient and less quarrelsome in future.

It will readily be supposed, that I was not insensible of the advantage I derived from the intelligent society of Kishen Doss. His attention, however, was not confined to mere words; he would frequently favour me on the occasion of a Hindoo marriage with a card of admission to a nautch, or festival, held in celebration of it, where it is usual for dancing girls* to exhibit their respective powers

* They are better known to the public by the coarser name of strumpets. Their profession, indeed, requires of them to be open to the embraces of persons of all casts; and although originally they appear to have been intended for the gratification of the Brahmans only, they are now accustomed to extend their favours to all who solicit them.

powers of attraction in public. These dancing girls, or, as they call themselves "*dava-dasi*," or *slaves of the gods*, are also employed in the worship of idols. In their dance they never mix with men; it is confined entirely to themselves. They are the only women taught to read, to sing, or to dance; and as they are considered immodest and profligate, it would be thought the mark of an irregular education, if a virtuous woman were found capable of either reading, singing, or dancing: she herself would be ashamed to confess it. For this reason the Brahmens are so disgusted with the European custom of permitting, nay, even of encouraging their wives, to "caper and amble in public promiscuously with the men."

We had made an appointment to attend a nautch, which was to take place in the week following, at the especial request of Kishen Doss, who assured us that "the dancing girls were selected among hundreds, for their superior beauty and accomplishments." It was about four days prior to the evening appointed for the nautch, that a confused noise was heard to proceed, in the evening, from the direction of the river. Bengalees in numbers were observed hurrying to and fro; and my curiosity being excited, I proceeded in the direction of the uproar. On reaching the banks of the river, I beheld a splendid budgerow*, near the landing-place, in a sinking state. The natives were unloading the baggage and wines with every expedition, while two "Hindoo-Britons," as they are designated, or "country borns†," were standing by, actively engaged in superintending, and lending their assistance. Presuming from this circumstance they were the owners, and perceiving they were English, I advanced towards them and tendered the use of my cottage, accompanied with an invitation, to remain with me until their affairs were arranged; which they accepted with avidity, and abundance of thanks. It may not be amiss to remark here, that the rites of hospitality are observed to an extreme, among Europeans in India. In travelling through the interior, it is considered an affront to pass an indigo factory, or the habitation of a European, without calling in, and sojourning a period of some days, as may prove most convenient to the

 traveller.

* A boat somewhat like our pleasure-barges: it draws from four to five feet water. Some have cabins fourteen feet wide, and proportionably long.

† The offspring of a European by a native woman.

traveller. Such strength has the love of country over our hearts, that strangers meet as brothers, and chat as sociably and happily as if they were really of one family. But, alas! this enviable custom, like the boasted hospitality of England in ancient times, is giving way considerably, from the great influx of European adventurers; and the habits and manners of the Anglais-Orientalists have of late years undergone a sensible change.

My guests were soon housed; and in the course of a few hours my hitherto secluded cottage was a scene of bustle and festivity; the misanthropic habits I had insensibly imbibed from a strict seclusion from the society of my countrymen, were then expelled; feelings that had so long lain dormant, as to become well-nigh extinct, again claimed their ascendancy, as the jovial catch,—the toast,—and enlivening glass, circulated freely; and after having been unused to my mother-tongue for months together, and accustomed alone to Hindoo accents, if I except the French spoken by my wife, I felt such music from the voices of my guests as delighted my heart, and aroused some of those few and short-lived, but delectable feelings of which man is susceptible during his fleeting existence on earth.

My guests, I found, were indigo planters, then on their return to their respective factories from an excursion of pleasure to the far-famed city of Hooghly, distant from Chandernagore but a few miles; and their budgerow having sprung a leak, they were thrown by this circumstance under the roof of my humble dwelling. Liberal were their professions of friendship, and urgent were they for me to leave my retreat to visit their respective factories; one of them, known by the name of Handitollah, being situated in-land, west of Calcutta, about twenty miles, and of which the eldest Hindoo-Briton, whom I shall call Dennison, was the owner. The other factory, the property of the youngest, whose name was Riago, was situated in the native village of Haughbaul-haut, distant in-land about thirty miles west of Handitollah. I was averse to leave my retreat: every shrub, every tree, and object about it, was entwined round our hearts in ties of endearment, and I thought I should be happy to live there for ever! But the thirst of man for novelty is insatiable; his eye is never satisfied; the sight of new objects in remote and foreign countries, but add fuel to his desire to see more; and with this eager propensity for novelty,

novelty, as well as with the hope of being still better acquainted with the natives, having an opportunity, as I then should, of witnessing their customs and manners in their primitive simplicity, unshackled at so great a distance in the interior, by the restraints which the presence of Europeans impose upon them; and also with a faint hope I indulged of meeting with some advantageous field for employment—I embraced their invitation. After remaining with me for the space of five days, during which period we lived in the enjoyment of uninterrupted cheerfulness and good humour, they departed for their respective factories, leaving a consummah with me, as a guide to conduct us to Handitollah; where it was proposed we should remain about three months, at the expiration of which period we were to proceed to Haugbaulhaut. In the mean time I dispatched another letter to my friend Endtfield, on the west coast of Sumatra, having concluded from his silence that mine had miscarried; as too well I knew his disposition and feelings of regard towards me, to harbour in my breast a doubt of their sincerity; and having left directions with the dawk, or post-office peons, to forward my letters, I prepared to commence my journey.

I was not forgetful, however, of my engagement at the nautch, and at ten o'clock on the appointed evening, I sought admission at the portico of a large native dwelling, buried in the centre of a fine garden, surrounded by underwood and shrubberies, about two miles from Chandernagore. It was opened by a dhurwan, or door-keeper; a Hindoo, bearing a cane, mounted with gold, then advanced, and ushered me into an immensely large room, crowded by natives almost to suffocation. There was however a small square, about sixteen feet by twelve feet, railed off in the centre, set apart for the dancing girls, as well as for the accommodation of natives of rank, or favour, and where I was offered in courtesy to my nation, a chair. The partition was richly carpeted; costly lustres were suspended from the roof, and on the sides of the walls many wall shades, or oblong glass lamps, lit with cocoa-nut oil, produced a brilliant effect. At the head of the room, distant ten or twelve paces from where I sat, was a throne of pure gold; the canopy, twelve feet in height, rested on four massy pillars, of the same precious metal, and of exquisite workmanship, the nobs being curiously fillagreed. On the front of the throne the Ho-

nourable Company's arms were emblazoned; and on the throne itself was seated the bridegroom, on a scarlet velvet cushion: he was a fair Hindoo, apparently about thirty: the bride was not present. By his side was a box, containing betel, which he chewed with great *sang-froid*, looking on at what was going forward with apparent indifference; and if I could justly divine the inward emotions of his soul, from the self-complacency depicted in his features, I should pronounce his happiness to originate in the ostentatious display of the finery by which he was surrounded, and to be increased both by the contemplation of his own importance, as the dispenser of benefits, however small, and by the conviction that he was the object of the admiration of the numerous multitude collected to witness the nautch. But hard indeed would it be, if he could not enjoy himself with an outlay of expence so princely, the greater part of which was lavished for the entertainment of others; especially as his pursuits were innocent, and in accordance with the custom of his country: indeed I could not but wish him from the bottom of my heart, every happiness he could desire.

As I before said, I was seated in the square: to my left, about ten paces from me, was the throne; and to the right, or rather in front of me, were two dancing girls. They were well, nay, elegantly made;—their form, was symmetry itself;—their colour, light olive, inclining to fair; their hair, long, black, soft, and silky, was divided in front, and fastened in a large fold on the lower part of the back of the head, reaching half way down the back; perfumes, sweet-scented flowers, and elegant attire, entwined with studied art, about the hair, indicated luxurious delight. One of them had a black circle round the whites of her eyes, and which, unaccountable as it may seem, added, at least in my eye, to her beauty. Their ears were decorated with small rings all round them, set with garnets, rubies, and other precious stones; and at the end of the ear were golden ear-rings, about four inches in diameter. On their necks were carcanets, and massy golden necklaces; on their arms, golden armlets; bangles of silver and gold on their wrists, and silver bangles on their ancles. Their attire was the same as is usually worn by Hindoo females, with the exception of the substitution of silk for cotton, and a pair of broad silk trowsers; the whole arranged with strict regard to decency, the

garments

garments being thrown loosely, and in graceful folds, around them, so as to set off their shape to the utmost advantage; the feet were left bare.

Their dance was a cadenced movement, but graceful and pleasing; in which the motion of their arms and hands, with a certain expression of feature, indicative of tenderness, sensibility, and delight, occupied their chief attention, as they do not dance as in Europe, with regular steps. At intervals they would chant, in a loud screeching tone (any thing but musical) verses of their songs, which, I understood, related to some circumstance or other of the lives or amours of their gods:—

> They sang, and as they raised their arms above,
> Their rolling eyes confessed their soul was—love!

Contrary to the representations that had been made to me, nothing lascivious in their movements did I see, nor any thing to offend the chastest eye; but such is the soft, seductive, and alluring character of the dance, as to produce in general a tendency to dalliance on every beholder. Behind them were seated cross-legged on the carpet, four Hindoo musicians; one of them beat a tum-tum, or drum. His head, shoulder, arms, and every muscle, were in motion during his performance. Another played a harp, in great favour among the Brahmans, called *bina*; the wires of metal, the catgut being considered too impure for the fingers of the Hindoos to touch. A third thrummed a guitar, called *kinnara*; and the fourth kept time by sounding a kind of musical bell. The noise of the tum-tum, with the discordant scrapings of the stringed instruments, and the intermitting screeching, or shrieks, of the girls—the jingling of their ornaments, diversified with the dance of the syrens—together with the splendour of the room,—the throne,—and the sable diversity of human objects composing the audience, formed the principal features of my entertainment, with which indeed I was much gratified, and did not return home until a late hour.

Nothing astonishes the European more than the absurd and obstreperous din and confusion produced by the music of the Hindoos. So harsh, piercing, and discordant, does it sound to an European ear, that the very idea of order, or any kind of method, would seem to be altogether out of the question. I can compare their music which accompanies the procession of their

idols, to nothing better than the sound of a poker struck violently against a brass pan; and that of their nautches, to the scraping of numerous ill-toned violins—to the sound of drums and bells, trying to do justice to some of the fiend-like airs in "Der Freischutz;" and yet Kishen Doss assured me, with great gravity, that "the English were wonderfully clever, and understood every branch of the arts and sciences to perfection, but one, and that was—music! of that," he said, "we had not the remotest idea."

Like us, they have a gamut of seven notes, and are taught music methodically. The gamut, which is said to be introduced into Europe but in modern times, by the Benedictine monk Guido Aretino, has been known to the Hindoos from the earliest ages; it is to borne in mind, however, that the Hindoos have never brought any thing to perfection; and that in sciences, arts, and manufactories, they have remained stationary at the point where they were several hundred years ago: their musicians at that remote period were as skilful as those of the present times; and if we compare the Hindoo music, as we now hear it, with that of Europe as it was two or three thousand years ago, the former might, and probably would, take precedence over all others in a similar stage of society:—"In those remote ages, the Druids, and other leaders of popular belief, in the greater part of Europe, used in their rites nothing but dismal and horrid shrieks, and had no instrumental music but what was produced by clashing one plate of metal against another—by beating on a stretched skin—or raising a dull and droning sound from a horn, or a rude instrument of twisted bark." And they would probably feel as little gratification at that period from the dulcet strains of an European band of music of the present day, as do the Hindoos, whom I have frequently seen gasing with a stare of vacant curiosity on our band, but so little delight did it seem to afford, that I never knew one of them to remain two minutes. As to the ornamental arts, such as painting, sculpture, and the like, they have as little emerged from barbarism as their music. Their painting, particularly, is nothing but mere daubing, set off with bright colours and extravagant glare.

To proceed:—A budgerow was now engaged, to convey myself and Virginia up a navigable creek, that ran a considerable

derable distance west, into the interior; and at the termination of which was situated, at the distance of a few miles, the indigo factory of Handitollah. On leaving Kishen Doss *pro tempore*, I bade him a cordial farewell, as I reverenced him for his age, as well as for his judgment, and kind attention to me. I could not but regret, however, as we parted on the banks of the river, that the customs of his cast forbade our shaking hands. Such is the nature of custom, or habit, and such power has it over us, that when he bade adieu, my heart was in my hand, ready to encircle his within its grasp; while he, influenced, no doubt, by similar impressions of regard, but unused to the " palmy test" of friendship, expressed his feelings through his aged but eloquent eyes;—pressing, at the same time, the head of his cane, or staff, with the like cordiality as we should our hands, had we been countrymen. I contented myself with expressing my hope, that " the Creator and Preserver of the universe would protect us both, until we met again." In this he cordially joined, expressing himself nearly in the same words.

We left Chandernagore at break of day, and sailed, with a fair wind, up the Hooghly, until we reached the nullah, or creek. We then steered westward, the boatmen plying their oars, in consequence of the wind failing. As we advanced, the prospect became more and more interesting: the green crops of paddy and rice, with the native husbandmen following their several occupations—the spots of jungle, or forest, scattered here and there—all bearing the aspect of nature's simplest garb, aided alone by the industry of man, and unadorned by the studied art with which the cultivated fields of Europe abound, was a gratifying spectacle;—one that I would not then have relinquished for any consideration. The jackal, in appearance not unlike the fox, was frequently seen prowling near us, staring, as a dog is sometimes observed to do, on seeing any attractive object—birds of gaudy plumage, particularly the paroquet, were in plenty; as also innumerable bevies of wild duck—the vulture and hawk, however, were the most conspicuous, and very active, converting the fair firmament into a seat of constant warfare and death. The face of the country was a level: and I must not omit to add, that the luxurious odour and refreshing fragrance of the morning air, surpassed any thing I had ever before experienced.

At

At ten o'clock the shallowness of the nullah prevented our further progress, and we landed; the coolies carrying our baggage, and the consummah, or butler, of Mr. Dennison, acting the part of a guide. It was at that season of the year called the cold season, in the month of June, when the north-east monsoon is prevalent; and on our landing, which was about eleven in the forenoon, we found the temperature of the air pleasingly mild, but in the mornings and evenings the cold is intense, the inconvenience of which is the more sensibly felt, from the circumstance of stoves being out of use in India. The appearance of ice is not uncommon; and the natives, huddling themselves together into a "pinching posture," seated on their hams, and wrapped in a piece of white calico, with nothing but their black pertinacious noses peeping out, produce a ludicrous effect, as viewed in contrast with the whiteness of their clothing.

We travelled on foot for six or seven miles, through a country as delightful as novel to me. Every step we trod on the plains, excited interest, from the possibility of meeting with something new, either in animal or vegetable nature. In the woods which we passed through, various objects served to heighten the pleasure of our journey, such as buffaloes, foxes, flying foxes, and peacocks, in their wild state; but the gay plumage of the feathered race, who were observed seeking shelter on the shady branches of the tamarind, the palm, and the pummalo trees, from the sun's rays, that became oppressive as it reached the meridian, were by far the most attractive of the surrounding novelties. It was the first time I had enjoyed what may be termed a country walk, since I left my native land; and both Virginia and myself felt the excursion a delicious treat. By three o'clock we reached the indigo factory of Handitollah.

The dwelling-house attached to the factory was situated at the extremity of a lane, about the distance of sixty yards from the high road that leads to Benares. Two enormous palm-trees reared their stately heads at the entrance; and on either side of the lane, trees were closely planted, affording a pleasant shade. In this house Mr. Dennison, his friend Riago, and Mrs. Riago, who had arrived from Calcutta, were in expectation of, and ready to receive us. If any state of social enjoyment, aided by a prospect of nature's fairest scenes, together with every personal

convenience

convenience to be desired, would bear comparison, out of Europe, with the like enjoyments in a farm-house in envied England,—it was the indigo factory of Mr. Dennison. Our host was a generous one: he had provided abundantly the luxuries of Europe, such as hams, cheeses, ale, and claret, with every eastern rarity to make us happy. Riago was apparently of a disposition similar to his friend Dennison; his wife, a young and amiable creole lady, soon formed an association of sentiment with mine; and I was then of a temperament to enjoy the delights thus amply afforded me, to perfection; but what contributed to my happiness more than any other circumstance, was the presence of my brother John, who had obtained a temporary leave of absence from his ship, that had arrived but the week before from a survey. To him also the change was a treat; and often would we indulge in the golden hope of one day returning with a competency to our native land, although neither of us had any feasible prospect of ever being able to do so. Still, however, we enjoyed the present moments; but not without alloy—the thought of the future, now sanguine, now depressed, would ever and anon intrude itself on our attention. After remaining with us one week, my brother bade us farewell—alas! for the last time;—since then I have not seen him; and from certain rumours, it is feared, he has met with an untimely grave in the river Hooghly.

The dwelling-house contained five rooms on one floor, a hall, and verandah: and the household of our host consisted of ten male servants, and five female slaves. In front, was a spacious tank, abounding with fish; numerous outhouses, stables, containing three fine Arabian horses, and a shed for a large male elephant, encircled the back part of the building, which, with a pair of fine vats for the manufacture of indigo, comprised the principal objects of the factory. Our chief amusement consisted in shooting and hunting; wild ducks and paroquets were abundant, as were flying foxes, that resemble when flying a squirrel, and have wings like those of a bat; also gwardors, or young alligators, usually met with basking in the sun near the borders of a tank, into which they plunge for safety on the appearance of danger. The flesh of the gwardor, as well as that of the flying fox, is esteemed a great delicacy.

The impression the mind receives in the interior of a forest in

in India, is far different, and I may say, of a more sublime tendency, than that received from a forest in England, inasmuch as not only the grandeur of Nature, as exhibited in the height, circumference, and density of the trees, is remarkable, but the intense interest which is the paramount and inseparable feeling in the mind of an European, affords in itself a great excitement. He knows not whether a tiger or capella—an eagle or a vulture—an alligator or a buffalo, may the next minute cross his path. To an European exploring the interior of a forest in Hindoostan, every object appears to belong to an undiscovered country, where every inch of ground may send forth something new: but to the native its interest is lost; to them nothing is new; and they only wonder at the sensitive curiosity evinced in general by Europeans, in regard to objects that appear to them things of course, and undeserving of notice.

It was in one of our shooting excursions about three in the afternoon, that we approached a square building in a glen, shaded by tamarind, cocoa, and pepel-trees, and well-nigh obscured from human observation: We were casually attracted to the spot in the pursuit of a wild peacock, which had eluded the range of our shot for some paces,—when a loud shout, echoing suddenly through the wood, rivetted our attention. We found it came from one of the temples of Siva: we looked at the interior; in the middle of the yard, or compound, was an altar, on which a bleating ram, reeking with gore, its head nearly severed from the body, was in the agonies of death. The black agents, who were the principal actors in this scene, were nearly in a state of nudity, and being liberally sprinkled with the blood of their victim, bore the appearance of fiends in human shape: another terrific yell rended the air when the victim made its last struggle. —"Ah!" thought I, "this must be some remnant of the sacrifices of the ancients to the true God; and these people know not, or will not believe, that the 'great sacrifice' for all, has already been made." On turning, however, to my friend Dennison for an explanation, he undeceived me—"They are not," said he, "sacrificing to God, but to the devil, or malevolent fiends, for the purpose of averting their wrath, and the evil to come." Such an act of gross fatality as this in the nineteenth century, even in the glens of Hindoostan, appeared to me almost incredible.

We

We shall now see what is said by the Abbé Dubois on the subject of this mode of worship, and on the fanatics, or worshippers of Bhutas, or fiends, who practise it.—" All nations of the earth," he says, " civilized or barbarous, have acknowledged the existence of certain evil spirits, whose nature and constant employment it is to injure men in various ways. Revealed religion alone, gives just and rational views of the subject: superstition, on the other hand, engendered by fear, and nourished by ignorance, has conjured up a thousand absurd and ridiculous fables, on a subject so well suited. People, who have not surmounted their crude notions concerning the general dispensation of Providence, when they find themselves unable to discover the causes of the cross accidents, however common, which befall them in the ordinary course of nature, cannot help ascribing them to the agency of invisible and wicked beings, who delight in bringing upon men the various ills and miseries to which they are exposed. The next step is, *to seek to propitiate the fiend, by prayers, adoration, and sacrifice.* The worship of demons is universally established and practised among the Hindoos; they call them *Bhuta*, which also signifies *element*, as if the elements were, in fact, nothing else but wicked spirits personified, from whose wrath and fury all the disturbances of nature arise. In many parts we meet temples, specially devoted to the worship of wicked spirits; there are districts also in which it almost exclusively predominates. Such is the long chain of mountains which extend on the west of the Mysore, where the greater part of the inhabitants practise no other worship but that of the devil: every house, and each family, has its own particular Bhuta, who stands for its tutelary god, and to whom daily prayers, and propitiatory sacrifices, are offered. In those parts, the image of the demon is every where seen, represented in a hideous form, and often by a shapeless stone. The worship of the Bhutas, and the manner of conducting it, are explained in the fourth veda of the Hindoos, called Atharvana-veda."

On our return, we were met by a guru, or priest, mounted on a bullock, which was decked out with bells, cowries*, and rings through its nose; round the neck of the guru, numerous rows of beads were suspended, reaching as far down as his breast, and which

* Cowry, a small shell, used in many parts of India as money; eighty make one pun, and fifty or sixty puns, one rupee.

which he was telling, with his fore finger and thumb, very earnestly as he passed us, muttering to himself at the same time his mantras, or prayers. His appearance was altogether remarkable, and, in connection with surrounding objects, well calculated to leave a lasting impression on the mind.

But what especially attracted my observance, was the singular appearance of the magicians;—as also of the snake-charmers. I shall first speak of the former. The art of magic is systematically taught among the Hindoos, and the Brahmans give it a place in the table of their sciences: its mysteries are said to be developed in several of their books; but particularly in that of the four vedas, which bears the name of *Atharvana-Veda*. In Europe, the art of magic (so long as a belief in it subsisted) was understood to mean a compact entered into with evil spirits. In India however, it is different; the practitioners receive their lessons from the masters of the art, or, as they themselves style them, their gurus.

The power is supposed to consist in drawing down evil, in providing antidotes against witchcraft, which they distribute to those who choose to consult them, such as enchanted beads, roots, plates of copper, with extraordinary figures, inexplicable words and characters engraved thereon, and likewise amulets, to serve as talismans from incantations of every kind; secret methods of inspiring love, and of curing, or controlling that passion, are professed to be understood by the magicians; also the secret of obtaining unbounded wealth, and worldly blessings: but the grand perfection of the art, is held to consist in the power of communicating enchantment to the arms used in war; and it is not uncommon for those who have weapons (supposed to be) charmed by magic, to bid defiance to wounds in battle. The power of a magician to destroy a besieging army, is another of the supposed prerogatives of magic; and it is well known that Tippoo, during his wars with the English, assembled the most celebrated magicians from distant parts of Asia, for the purpose of destroying the English army; but they were obliged to confess, that their incantations had no power over Europeans.

The practitioners of the art are said to make use of the bones of certain animals, such as the elephant, black dog, tiger, black cat, or bear; also the bones of a man born on a Sunday, when it

falls

falls on the new moon, and of a woman born on a Friday; the foot bones of an European, of a Mahometan, Pariah, and several others. They also make use of scorpions. But the most horrible characteristic of this pernicious art is, the sacrifice of *human victims* *, usually young girls, of the age of twelve years; this they do not scruple to do whenever any urgent or particular effects are required to be produced.

The appearance of the magician I saw was quite in unison with his calling; he rode on a sorry-looking donkey; the cap he wore was blue, and of a conical shape; his neck and breast were literally covered with beads, and his fingers with silver rings. He was tall and thin, of a jet-black complexion; his large black eyes appeared ready to start out of their sockets, from the apparent effects of stupifying drugs, or intoxicating spirits. Indeed, if ever human being was calculated, by his appearance, to convey to the mind the idea of a fiend, it certainly was this magician.

I first saw him in one of my rambles among the precincts of Handitollah, when I was attended only by my servant, who understood English well. Observing a crowd of natives near the basar, I ventured to approach them, which was no sooner observed by the by-standers, than they made way for myself and attendant. The magician was holding forth, in a loud and animated strain, with his face to the sun, and apparently addressing it; but, on seeing my servant, he suddenly changed his position, and ordered him to stand in the centre of a ring there was ready formed in the midst of them, and when there, to throw the cane he held in his hand on the ground. He immediately complied; but no sooner had he entered the circle, and thrown down his cane, than he exhibited every symptom of terror, and cried aloud that he was encompassed by a circle of fire, from which it was impossible

* That human sacrifices have existed among the Hindoos, may be proved from a Hindoo book, said to be written under the direction of Siva, entitled the "*Kalika-Purana*," in which are detailed the mode, ceremonies, and advantages of sacrificing human victims to such gods as delight in them. The chief of these gods are, *Bahria*, *Yama*, *Dharmaraja*, *Kali*, and *Mariama*. The sacrifice is held in this book as a right inherent in princes; the object of the awful rite being to render the divinities more placable, and to obtain their favourable aid in battle. Happily, however, this horrid practice is now nearly, if not entirely, abolished, if the victims sacrificed in secret by the magicians, in their ceremonies, are excepted. One of the books of the sacred Veda, called "Atharvana-Veda," which teaches the magical art, recognizes this horrible ceremony.

impossible for him to escape:—This lasted for the space of two minutes. The magician then advanced, muttering some unintelligible words, and told my servant to pick up his cane. He then appeared even more terrified than before, declaring he was in the midst of water, and should be drowned; indeed, his indications of terror were so excessive, that I expected every moment to see him faint, or lose his senses. The magician immediately pulled him out of the ring by the hand, and the astonished crowd separated. As for my servant, he departed hastily away, seemingly very glad to escape, followed by myself and the magician, who, it appeared, was well known to Mr. Dennison.

For some weeks he continued to visit us daily, exhibiting unaccountable specimens of his art, which failed to make us proselytes to the belief of immediate supernatural agency, but certainly afforded a fund of amusement. The limits of this work will not admit of a description of them, but for the satisfaction of such readers as desire further information, I insert the following extract from the able author before quoted, with which I shall conclude the subject.—" But it is from rivals who exercise the same trade, that the magician has most to dread. These do what they can to counteract his projects, and to make the effects of his own wicked contrivances fall upon himself, by employing spells of still greater efficacy. This being the case, they bear a mortal hatred towards each other, or at least pretend to do so. When they meet, their mutual dislike breaks out into loud defiance, calling on those within their reach to decide as judges between them, and pronounce which of the two is the more skilful. The contest begins. The problem perhaps is, to lift a straw from the ground, or a piece of money, without touching it. Both advance, but they stop one another's progress by flinging enchanted cinders, or by reciting mantras. They both feel at the same instant, an invisible, but irresistible force, which repulses and drives them back. They again approach, redoubling their efforts. The sweat extends in drops; blood is discharged from their mouths. One of them, in the scramble, gets hold of the piece of money, or the straw, and he is clamorously proclaimed the victor.

" Sometimes one of the combatants is violently precipitated upon the ground by the force of the mantras of his antagonist. In this state he remains for a long while stretched at his whole length, breathless,

breathless, and (as he makes it appear) deprived of sensation. At length he gets up, and affects to be very ill for several days.

"It will readily be supposed that I attribute such disputes and their consequences to a premeditated understanding between the quacks; but, through all India, the people are firmly persuaded that these processes result from magical secrets known only to the initiated few, who, by their means, produce such wonderful effects; and it must be owned, that effects are occasionally produced by them, of which it would not be easy to divine the cause."

It now remains for me to allude to the snake-charmer, or keeper of serpents; but it is necessary first to mention, that of all noxious animals found in India, there are none that occasion more frequent, or more fatal results, than serpents. The evils inflicted by the tiger, though very frightful, occur more rarely, and are less generally felt. In any one village in India, hardly a month passes without some person suffering sudden death from the bite of a serpent. The most common, and, at the same time, the most venomous, is what, in Europe, is generally called the *capella*, or hooded snake; but by the Hindoos, *Naga*. Its bite sometimes occasions instant death. It is distinguished by a membrane on each side of the head, which, in general, is not perceived; but which, whenever the animal is irritated, rises up, and forms a kind of head-dress, presenting a very beautiful appearance. Unfortunately this snake is met with every where; and for this reason, the Hindoos offer sacrifice and adoration to it, above all others. The festival especially consecrated to its worship (and which is one of the eighteen annual festivals of the Hindoos), is celebrated with great pomp on the fifth day of the moon in December. The constant fear of its dreadful bite has caused it to be considered the most sacred of animals. Upon the same principle, the Egyptians pay divine honours to the crocodile.—"At a place called Subrahmanya, in the west of the Mysore, there is a temple expressly erected to serpents, the name of Subrahmanya being derived from the great serpent Subraya, which is renowned in Hindoo fable, and the principal deity honoured at this pagoda. When the festival comes round, vast crowds assemble from all parts, to offer sacrifices to their creeping gods in their sacred dome. Many serpents, both of the capella and other species, have taken up their

residence within it, in holes made for the purpose. They are kept, and well fed, by the presiding Brahmans, with milk, butter, and bananas. By the protection they here enjoy, they multiply exceedingly, and may be seen swarming from every cranny in the temple: and a terrible sacrilege it would be to injure or molest them!

Early one morning I was called up to witness the feats of a snake-charmer, who had arrived with two baskets, carefully covered over, and filled with serpents of every kind. Loosely hung on his ancles was a variety of large hollow brass rings; they were cut in two breadthwise, and so constructed, that at each motion of his foot, the two sides striking against each other, produced a shrill noise, resembling the sound of a brass basin when struck with a hammer. He placed his baskets down, and playing a pipe, the sounds of which were both harsh and piercing, walked leisurely round the hall and bed-rooms, looking into each crevice, or aperture, that presented itself in the apartments, with uncommon quickness. Suddenly he creeped cautiously towards a corner of one of the rooms, still playing his pipe, and with the quickness of lightning, stretched his hand towards a capella we saw peeping out, as if listening to the music: a squeak, like to that of a rat, announced its capture, and it appeared entwined round the juggler's arm, while its head and fangs were grasped firmly between his finger and thumb. His thumb indeed was bloody; but after applying some restorative medicine to the wound, he placed the serpent in his basket with the others. The Hindoos confidently believe that snakes are charmed by the sound of the pipe,—that there is no deception in the case; but many Europeans conclude that it is a rank imposition; the art consisting in putting a snake previously tamed, and accustomed to their music, into some remote place, and so managing, that in appearing to go casually in that direction, and beginning to play, the snake comes forward at the accustomed sound: but at the same time, it must be confessed that this opinion is not general; and I have heard many of my countrymen, who have resided twenty years and upwards among the Hindoos, declare their conviction that, "in many cases there was no deception whatever." Relative to the subject, I cannot omit quoting the following striking passages of Scripture, which would lead to the

the conclusion, that whatever doubts may arise, as to the existence of the art in modern times, there is strong reason to suppose it was recognised in the days of old;—"They are as venomous as the poison of a serpent; even like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely."—Psalm lviii. 4. "For behold I will send serpents, cockatrices among you, which will not be charmed."—Jerem. viii. 17.

Previous to this man's departure, he exhibited, at the particular request of Mr. Dennison, the power he possessed over the reptiles, by making them "dance," as he expressed it. He first seated himself on the ground, in front of the baskets containing the serpents, and began to play his pipe. After a few minutes, he slowly, and with great caution, removed the lids of the baskets, when the serpents, attracted by the music, were observed to creep out; but they seemed (the capellas in particular) more inclined to be angry, than to dance; and on being stimulated by the juggler, who moved them about with a cane, they assumed a threatening posture. The man kept near them, still playing, and striking his feet together at the same time, producing a compound of harsh sounds, which seemed to stupify the serpents;—they appeared giddy,—their eyes grew dim,—and in the attempt to balance themselves, exhibited the appearance of dancing. He then covered the baskets, and having secured them by fastenings, buckled them round his person, and made his farewell salam, receiving one rupee and a half for his pains.

The principal source of gratification derived by the European traveller, on his sojourn in a country village in Hindoostan, is the diversity of new and attractive objects, which are continually presented to view in his excursions through the neighbouring hamlets. The truth of this was never perhaps more fully developed to the mind of the traveller, than on the following occasion. It was about the hour of twelve or one, when we found ourselves in the midst of a forest, on our return to Hanßitollah from shooting. Suddenly there appeared in front of us a bevy of elephants, about fifty in number, besides camels and dromedaries; they were proceeding to join some of the Company's infantry regiments, having halted in a plain of the forest, interspersed with lofty trees, the higher leaves of which were of sin-

gular extension, and formed a complete shelter from the sun's rays. Some of the elephants were of an enormous size, apparently nearly twice as large as such as I have seen exhibited in England. They appeared perfectly tame, suffering me to approach close to them, while they were occupied in helping themselves with their trunks to the leaves of trees, furnished by their keepers. The appearance of so many of these colossal animals, feeding themselves, and tossing immense boughs in the air with their huge trunks, was a superb spectacle. Some were on the ground, apparently dozing—others, busily engaged in cooling themselves, by spirting water through their trunks over their bodies,—in fondling one another, or beating off the flies with their proboscis, or with the flaps of their ears; while the natives, seated in the shade, were eating their homely meal of curry and rice, served up on the broad leaf of the plantain tree. The bright glare of the atmosphere;—the wild grandeur displayed in the surrounding landscape;—the novel group of men and animals before me, altogether conveyed to my mind such an enviable sensation of delight, that I reclined for two hours on the threshold of an Indian hut, which was in the midst of them: the sun now disappearing in the west, the travellers prepared their chattels, roused their beasts, and mounting them, pursued their journey towards the high road which leads to Benares; and in another hour, were out of sight.

After remaining at Handitollah for the space of three months, we commenced our journey towards Mr. Riago's indigo factory, situated twenty miles inland, near the native village of Haughaulhaut. At the distance of seven miles from Handitollah, dwelt a brother of Mr. Dennison, who kindly favoured us with the loan of his elephant, which was sufficient, with the one we had, to convey our party in the following order:—Mr. Dennison on horseback; Riago and his wife on one elephant, and Virginia and myself on the other. Early in the morning we climbed a ladder placed on the side of the elephant (who was made to crouch on its knees with the utmost mildness, whenever we mounted or dismounted), and soon found ourselves seated in a kind of double chair, or "howdah," firmly fastened on the animal's back. The native who conducted us was seated astride on the neck, armed with a sharp-pointed rod of steel, with which he guided

guided the beast, by striking the sharp end into the crown, or sides of the head, according to the direction in which he wished him to proceed. The head was completely scarified, from the severity of this infliction; but the animal did not appear to suffer so much pain as the spectator would be led to imagine, from the appearance of the wounds. The ladder by which we ascended was afterwards suspended from the crupper. We journeyed on through a flat but delightful country; the animated prospect of the landscape around us receiving its richest hue from the early green blades of paddy, rice, indigo, and waving stalks of the sugar-cane, which were scattered in patches, amid forests, coppices, and rivulets. Of all conveyances, that of the elephant is most disagreeable and uneasy; for the animal does not, like other quadrupeds, advance together a near leg and off leg, but the two legs of one side. So intolerable indeed did the jolting prove, as nearly to deprive us of breath; and glad I was, after having made six or seven miles progress, to halt at a village, and descend the ladder, to enjoy the luxury of a few minutes respite. On these occasions it was my delight to purchase some cocoa-nuts for the elephant, who would extend his proboscis, and receive them from me with every token of gratitude which he was capable of devising: he introduced them into his jaws, and cracked them one by one, for the sake of the milk, of which he seemed immoderately fond. When he had emptied them all, he would resort to every species of entreaty, in dumb eloquence, to obtain more;—extending his proboscis towards me, and eyeing me with a significant and tender persuasiveness, so irresistible, that I indulged him with a similar treat at every village where we halted. This elephant travelled at the rate of five miles an hour; but in case of flight or pursuit, the progress of these animals is remarkably quick, considering their enormous bulk; so swift indeed, as to render it extremely arduous for Indians even, who are exceedingly good runners, either to overtake them, or to escape from them in an open field. For the first twenty miles we travelled on the high road: we then directed our course to the south, over a bleak tract of land, where traces of the haunts of the fox and jackall were alone perceptible. After travelling a few miles, a verdant country of hill and dale, intersected with rivulets,

 opened

opened to our view. Our elephant evinced uncommon caution and sagacity in crossing these rivulets: it was therefore not until we approached a wide river, the banks of which were steep and slippery, that I became apprehensive for our safety. The "howdah," in which we were seated, I knew was well secured; but I was fearful the ponderous beast would roll over, in descending the alarmingly steep banks, and crush us to death. He approached the bank, and made a halt, surveying it, like a consummate general who knew perfectly well what he was about: he then cautiously advanced, placing his right foot, and proboscis, on the declivity of the bank, to try its firmness,—then the other foot, and descended slowly and with remarkable caution, until he reached the water, which he waded through with infinite good-humour and friskiness, as evinced by the cheerful motion of his proboscis. In the middle of the river the water became so deep as nearly to cover his back; and so continued until he approached the opposite side, the difficulty attending the ascent of which, he easily surmounted, evincing the same caution and sagacity as before, while we were obliged to *hold on*, and balance ourselves with great care and attention.

At length we approached the village of Haughbaul-haut, which presented to view a collection of native dwellings, some of which indeed were of pucka, or brick, but the generality of earth, and thatched with straw. The inside of every house was divided into very dark chambers, the use of windows being unknown to the Hindoos. At two o'clock, having reached the end of our journey, we halted at a miserable bungalow, situated in the centre of a bleak common, two miles distant from the village; and having dismounted, found the interior of our new habitation as gloomy as its exterior. It contained a hall, bedroom, and verandah on a floor, supported by crazy posts and beams, raised ten feet from the ground, the only access to it being by means of a ladder, so placed as to face the entrance to the hall, where a door ought to have been; but which had long since been blown away. The bedroom door had shared the same fate. The roof, which was a thatched one, we soon found was not weather-proof; for, to our chagrin, a storm of wind and hail came on with such violence, as to shake the wretched

dwelling

dwelling to its foundation, while we, huddling together in the corners of the hall, endeavoured, but in vain, to avoid the fury of the elements. This unpleasant termination to an unpleasant journey did not in the least discompose our disposition to enjoy ourselves: a hamper, containing a round of beef, and other good cheer, was, we were aware, among our "train of moveables;" we knew too, that better accommodation could not be procured within fifteen miles; and while we were considering these matters, the weather cleared up. We soon changed our clothes, and seating ourselves round a table, spread with excellent cheer, spent the remainder of the evening in good humour and hilarity.

It was however a matter of no small difficulty to discover means to accommodate ourselves for the night. It is true, there were three bedsteads, and good beds, but only two rooms and a verandah. To add to the difficulty, Mrs. Riago had the misfortune to lose two lovely children, in this same bungalow. She was a great enthusiast, perhaps rather superstitious; certain however it is, that she attributed the death of her babes (who died suddenly, and nearly at the same time) to the effect of fright, arising from the nocturnal appearance of supernatural visitants. Of this conviction she failed not to inform my wife, accompanying her arguments with impressive energy,—and stating various instances in corroboration of her conviction, which very soon occasioned closer debates on the subject; and at length concluded with the two ladies becoming equally terrified. In this state of things, the females felt a disinclination to be separated; and it was at length arranged that they should sleep together in the bedroom;—Dennison in the hall,—and Riago and myself in the verandah, which faced the north, and which, but for the roof, would have been entirely exposed to the air, the sides being open. I must here, for reasons which I shall hereafter mention, beg the reader's attention to the precise situation of the verandah, and of our bed in it. The verandah was about fifteen feet long, and six wide. Our bed was fixed near the wall, and between the doors of the two rooms;—the entrance to the hall being at the head of the bed, and that to the bedroom, at the foot. The ladder by which we descended to the ground, ten feet beneath us, faced the entrance to the hall, and within six feet of the head of our bed. I have been thus minute in describing the relative

situation of the apartments, because I shall presently have occasion to revert to it, in connexion with a circumstance, at once extraordinary and unaccountable.

In addition to the amusement of shooting, our leisure was diversified by hunting the tiger and wild boar. The former was less frequently to be found than the latter, only two tigers having been taken during our stay of three months, while five boars were killed, and one escaped. The danger of the tiger-hunt is not so imminent as may be imagined. The first tiger we hunted lay concealed, we were informed, in a sugar-cane field five miles distant from us; and the moment this intelligence was received, the elephants were ordered to be accoutred, and we started off with all possible haste; Dennison, who was an experienced practitioner in the hunt, being mounted on his own elephant, which had been trained to stand fire; while Riago and myself rode that which had conveyed myself and Virginia from Handitollah: inside of the howdah were three muskets loaded with ball, a brace of pistols, and two spears. As we proceeded on our march, we enjoyed the novel and gratifying spectacle of hundreds of natives leaving their respective huts, and running with considerable swiftness to join our party; most of them carried spears, and they all seemed to enter into the spirit of the sport, with as much glee as the peasantry of England are observed to manifest in a fox-chase. There was not a single dog in our train; and this may appear singular to those who have read so much of the boasted utility of the Indian dogs in the tiger-hunt. That a superior breed of hounds, bred expressly for the purpose, may exist in the upper provinces, I am not prepared to deny; but in the towns and villages of the southern provinces of Hindoostan, the only dogs to be met with are a set of useless curs, called "Pariahs*." English hounds, on their first arrival in the country, are known to fetch at the auction-rooms in Calcutta, from eight hundred to twelve hundred Sicca rupees (from £100 to £150); but even these lose their pristine qualities in a few months, and become comparatively enervated and useless. The same tendency to degenerate, is visible

* "Pariah," is a general term of degradation; any thing bad, despicable, or worthless, is termed a Pariah. It is even applied to a low cast of Hindoos.

visible in every description of English cattle, particularly the cow, which indeed, after a short residence in the country, will not yield any milk.

The concourse of a great multitude of natives near a sugar-cane field, at a short distance in our front, and the circumstance of some youths being observed to climb the adjacent cocoa-nut trees, intimated our near approach to the spot where the tiger was. No sooner did the elephants get scent of the animal (which they did at a great distance, their senses being extremely acute), than the one we rode exhibited every symptom of uneasiness, snorting, bellowing, standing still, and endeavouring to retrace his steps: Dennison's, on the contrary, marched boldly forward, twirling his trunk in the air, and seemingly sensible of what was going on;—while we were busied in preparing the fire-arms, and encouraging the driver to accelerate our progress, as we were at a considerable distance in the rear of Dennison. On reaching the spot, we found that the tiger had secreted himself in the midst of the sugar-cane field, and that it was only from one particular spot that we could espy him. From this spot we thought he was within range of our ball: he was stretched in a couchant posture, and we approached as near as we could, to take effective aim, having agreed, at a preconcerted signal, to fire together. The signal was given: we fired—a dead stillness ensued—and we were in the act of reloading, when a loud and terrific roar announced to us the certainty of the tiger having been wounded. Dennison's elephant then held his trunk erect, as well to preserve it, as to prepare for attack. It was singular to observe the coolness and self-possession manifested by the ponderous beast during the fire, and afterwards; but this was not the case with ours—no sooner did the report of our muskets strike upon his ear, than he evinced a determination to retreat; and the deep and hollow roar sent forth by the tiger after we had fired, caused our elephant to tremble exceedingly, and to scamper away from the scene of action amazingly fast, rending the air with a loud and shrill cry, like that of a trumpet. The rapid and awkward motion of the animal placed my companion and myself in imminent peril; and it was with the utmost difficulty that we could [illegible] we were jolted about, and against each oth[illegible]ble

force; and more than once were well-nigh ejected out of the howdah upon the elephant's back. It was not until he had conveyed us a distance of two miles, that his progress could be arrested sufficiently to admit of our looking back on our party, which we no sooner did, than we observed Dennison and the natives in pursuit of the tiger, who had fled from his retreat, and was observed to be pursuing his course over a plain, and making for a thick jungle, or wood, at the distance of a mile and a half in his front. The appearance of the animal, as he looked back on his pursuers, lashing his sides with his tail, and exhibiting excessive excitement, was beautiful in the extreme, and made us doubly vexed at our exclusion from the pleasure of the sport. In vain we exhorted our guide to urge the cowardly animal back: turn he certainly did, and, by the intensity of his gaze, seemed to take as much interest in the spectacle, as ourselves; but not a step would he move towards the scene of action. Seeing this, and finding it difficult to restrain our ardour, we dismounted, and ran on foot, each armed with a musket, until we reached the party, who had formed themselves round a shed in the jungle, in a dark corner of which the tiger lay. On our arrival, Dennison directed his guide to make the elephant crouch, and to fix the ladder for us to mount; and we soon found ourselves securely placed with him in his howdah, which was large enough to accommodate us with perfect convenience.

Various ineffectual attempts were then made to rouse the tiger from his retreat; the natives, from the tops of trees, keeping up a constant fire in his rear, and our elephant being stationed in his front, to cut off his retreat, while a terrific howl occasionally intimated his reception of some galling wound. Immediately after one of these piercing howls, the animal's rage seemed to be roused to desperation; roaring dreadfully, his eyes flashing fire, and his claws extended, he bounded within ten feet of our elephant, who kept his trunk erect, and in this posture the two animals gazed open-mouthed at each other, for the space of a minute, each watching the movement of the other with the utmost attention. At this juncture we fired; the elephant at the same instant darting forward, aimed a desperate blow with his trunk at the tiger, who was just in the act of springing at us, and felled him to the earth; our ally then, with singular

gular dexterity, and in a space of time scarcely credible, lifted him up, and crushed him under foot, forcing his entrails through the wounds: the natives now advanced, and plunged innumerable spears down the beast's throat, and through his body. The appalling roars and heart-rending cries of the animal were such, as to excite our pity, notwithstanding his natural ferocity, and enmity to man. In a few minutes he lay motionless, the natives glutting their fury by plunging spears through and through his body long after he was dead, and at the same time, uttering, with a savageness scarcely human, loud groans and yells; as for ourselves, we were content with cutting a lock off his whiskers, by way of trophy: we then returned home. And here I cannot withhold the expression of my admiration at the instinctive caution which the elephant evinced in the preservation of his trunk; at the singular dexterity, precision, and invincible power of his attack; and at the consummate coolness, sagacity, courage, and self-possession displayed by him throughout. Every individual of the species is nature's wonder! the ease with which he provides for all his wants, by means of that most surprising and useful member, his proboscis, assisted by his forefeet, is very remarkable: but, that in which he far surpasses every animal, the dog perhaps excepted, is his wonderful instinct, which it is difficult to distinguish, in many instances, from reason. Yet how patient and docile! how subservient and attached he is to man! He is even taught to gambol, or, as it is styled, to "dance," and is often seen to do so at an Hindoo fair. So careful is he of human life on those occasions, and so tender towards little children, that he will avoid treading on them in a crowd, with astonishing care and dexterity. His ire is seldom roused without great provocation. The withholding of his food is known to produce that effect: when once roused, he is terrible, and his anger is sometimes attended with fatal effects. He is, however, soon appeased, and is frequently observed to shew signs of contrition. By some writers he is represented as malicious, spiteful, vindictive, and cruel. This I have heard disputed; although his keen sensibility of bad treatment, is admitted. He is susceptible of affectionate emotions; he is frequently seen to cry, and has been known to lay down his life for his keeper.

Our second tiger hunt was only dissimilar to the first in the cir-

cumstance of the animal having eluded our pursuit until night-fall, which compelled us to leave the field. The following morning we resumed the hunt, and traced the tiger by the marks of his feet to a thick jungle, five miles to the south, where he was taken and killed nearly in the same manner with the first.

Hunting the wild boar is attended with considerably more peril than the tiger hunt; the boar is hunted on horseback: so fierce is this creature, that it is frequently known to charge the huntsmen, and to rip open the horses' chests, and with determined ferocity, killing, or incurably wounding, all who oppose him. Dennison, in one of these charges, had his boot ripped up from the ancle to the knee, as neatly as if it had been cut by a penknife; and, had he been a few inches nearer the animal, would have received serious injury. His tusks, which are sharp, and pointed at the end, are his weapons of attack: in his endeavours to elude pursuit, he often evinces considerable sagacity; he runs with the fleetness of a horse at full gallop; and it is remarkable, that in the pursuit, or charge of any object, he never deviates from the straight line: I once saw a native who was suddenly surprised by the boar, lift up his leg very adroitly, and escape unhurt; the boar passing under it, without stopping or turning, and pursuing his way to attack another. On the whole, the wild boar hunt is full of excitement and interest, and, next to the tiger hunt, is accounted the most agreeable of Indian field sports.

The reader ere this, may possibly have come to the conclusion I was one of those happy sons of earth, who by experience know the value of disinterested friendship; and indeed up to this period I thought myself in possession of the treasure: but, alas! *disinterested* friendship is rarely to be met with. Mr. Dennison was a character, of whom my youth and unsuspicious nature had formed but a very erroneous conception. Generous he certainly was, and convivial; but his passions were ungovernable, and he thought nothing treacherous or cruel which afforded him the means of gratifying them. Possessed of power and riches, he would abuse the one and lavish the other in the attainment of any favourite object, however unhallowed; and if that object happened to be a beautiful woman, the necessity of sacrificing a fellow-creature, her natural protector, was no obstacle in his way. A circumstance that took place, twelve months previous to the commencement of our

our intimacy, may perhaps give the reader a better insight into his character, than any comments of mine.

The marriage-procession of a poor but respectable Brahman, which was intended to celebrate the consummation*, was to pass through a village near Handitollah. The distinguished beauty of the bride had become known in the adjoining towns and villages, and, at the appointed day, thousands of natives, attracted by this circumstance, assembled to witness the procession: among them was Dennison, mounted on an elegant and valuable hunter, named Tippoo. He joined the procession, which was followed by a vast concourse of people; but no sooner did he behold the resplendent beauty of the bride, than his heart was fired (to use his own expression) with an irresistible impulse to gain immediate possession of her. He guided his horse close to the palanquin in which the beautiful girl, ornamented with a profusion of precious stones, and golden trinkets, many of them borrowed for the occasion, was seated; and seizing her with the quickness of lightning round the waist, and placing her before him, he plunged his spurs violently into the sides of his steed, and was out of sight almost before the astonished crowd were sensible of their loss. Pursuit was instantly made, but in vain; he fled with his victim to Calcutta, and, concealed there, enjoyed the fruit of which he had so forcibly got possession, The evil did not however end here: the people assembled in multitudes round his house, and if his mother, who was very rich, and devotedly attached to her son, had not appeased the wrath of the people, by paying some thousands of rupees, he would have fallen a victim, either to their vengeance, or to the laws of the country. As the Sabine women soon became reconciled to their Roman ravishers, so this lovely girl, after the lapse of a few weeks, became devotedly attached to Dennison.

With respect to Riago, he had all the passions of Dennison, but wanted equal wealth to carry his designs into execution: he had, however, identified his interests with those of his friend, and I verily believe, would have willingly joined him, to use the language of Iago, in—

"What bloody work soe'er."

One day, Dennison and myself were taking a walk, and, as we approached a large tank, or pond, which was shaded with thick

* Vide page 145 and 146.

thick jungle, and ornamented by a number of wild peacocks, who screamed their harsh notes, and took to the wing, as we appeared, he said to me—"Naufragus, I have for some days past been thinking of a scheme, which will, if I mistake not, afford you, and indeed all three of us, a fair prospect of making a speedy fortune: it is this:—I intend to set up a charcoal manufactory, in a glen of the interior, bordering on a river communicating with the Hooghly. The interest I have with the mint-master, and ship-owners in Calcutta, will enable me to insure a contract for its sale, which will yield a profit of seven or eight thousand per cent. I have, you must be sensible, Naufragus, a friendship for you, as also for Virginia; and will readily admit you, as a third partner, in the concern. You and Riago, therefore, can go next week, and choose an eligible spot to build a bungalow upon for our accommodation; while I remain here, to protect the females." The plan appeared to me so good, and its execution so easy, that I was overjoyed at the idea; and on our walk home, we continued calculating the profits, until imagination had placed princely fortunes in our hands. The following day, we agreed to hunt the boar. On returning home, my mind filled with pleasing anticipations, my astonishment was extreme to find my wife in deep affliction. No sooner was I by her side, than she led me to the adjoining room, and spoke to the following effect.—"Rejoiced am I to see you alive, Naufragus!—I weep, through fear of your safety—nothing more; but if your regard for me is really sincere, prove it, by complying with my request. Leave this horrid place immediately, and return to Chandernagore. Believe me, we are not safe here; we are on the brink of destruction, and in the hands, I have reason to think, of murderers!"—"How so?"—"That, I will tell you hereafter," said she; "first set my heart at rest—give me your promise to return to-morrow."—"You are unreasonable," I replied; "this is some silly whim of yours. Is it because you see me happy among cheerful and hospitable friends, that you wish me to return? Do you grudge me the few hours of social enjoyment, almost the first that chance has thrown in our way, since our marriage? or, would you blast the golden harvest that awaits us? But you know not what is in contemplation; we are going far into the interior, where there is a promising

field

field for the exercise of industry, and abundance of wealth to reward it,—wealth which will afford us the means of passing the summer of our existence happily together, either in your native land, or in Europe."

"Your happiness and welfare are mine, Naufragus; can I do otherwise than desire both, as they are both interwoven with my own? Do not suppose this, nor disregard my counsel: at least, hear my reasons. This morning, previous to Mr. Dennison's walk with you, I overheard a conversation between him and Riago. It almost petrified me. Dennison said he would get you out of the way, and possess me, if he perished in the attempt; and the villain Riago encouraged him to do so!" This intelligence surprised me; but with the view to pacify her, I replied, that I thought she might be mistaken, but that I certainly would consider.

We dined as usual at five. My thoughts busied on various subjects, I spoke but little; while Dennison and Riago were in deep discourse by themselves. After tea, however, we conversed on the golden prospects before us, until ten, when the ladies retired to bed, leaving me and my two companions together. In a few minutes, I too retired; and on reaching the verandah, observed that the full moon had risen, and was shining with a brilliancy so luminous, that by its aid I could, with perfect convenience, have read the smallest print. I threw myself on the bed, and was in the act of commending myself to the care and protection of that Providence which had never yet forsaken me, when, as I knelt, with my face to the east, I beheld a figure approaching, which I naturally concluded to be no other than my bed-fellow, Riago. Why I was averse to being seen in the posture of prayer, I leave others better versed in human nature than myself to determine; certain it is, I no sooner observed the figure, than I crouched down, gradually, until I lay on my back, in the hope of having escaped observation, and in momentary expectation of Riago's appearance. The figure approached: still supposing it to be Riago, I did not then look at it attentively, but lifted the curtains, which were of white gauze, so fine as scarcely to be perceptible, for Riago to come in. The figure paused for the space of about a second, and, to my astonishment, proceeded onward towards the termination of the verandah, whence there was no outlet. Amazed,

sed, I now looked stedfastly at it, when, for a moment or two, it appeared to be stationary, at the distance of about six paces from me, presenting the appearance of a person not unlike in stature to Riago, but so peculiarly enveloped in, apparently, the folds of a light-coloured mantle, as to render it impossible for me to distinguish its features: it immediately disappeared, or, rather, vanished from my fixed gaze. My agitation was excessive; I instantly bounded off the bed, and entered the hall, where I found Dennison and Riago, still conversing, as when I left them. No sooner did I communicate what I had observed, than they both evinced evident signs of perturbation, and we all three walked into the verandah. The ladies, who had overheard our discourse, speedily attired themselves, and came into the hall, where we all sat up during the night, rivetted to our seats by an inconceivable dread, against which neither the iron nerves of Dennison nor of Riago were proof.

The question which naturally arises is, what could this phenomenon be? The answer, I cannot pretend to furnish; but, content with having stated the fact, I leave the reader to form his own conclusions on the subject, only observing, as far as regards myself, that I have never been either credulous or superstitious. That I actually saw the figure, is certain: it is equally certain, that I saw it vanish; neither deception from without, nor imagination working within, could have produced the effect*. No human being, except ourselves, was then at the bungalow, nor for many

* This at least is my own impression; but a friend of mine, who is rather sceptical on the subject of ghosts and apparitions, as utterly irreconcilable with the theory of vision, which, from the facts upon which it is built, teaches that it is from material objects alone that rays can be reflected; and that it is those rays only which impinge upon the retina that can produce vision, and thinks that the history of the imagination would supply many instances superior to this of the power of that faculty. He does not, however, assert, that no spirit was ever made visible to the human eye, thinking that every person who believes the Scriptures must admit that fact; but is of opinion, that, in every instance recorded there, the effect was produced by miracle. But he adds—resort to miracle will solve any difficulty: and, with reference to this particular instance, asks, what good the apparition performed? He says, it did not warn, either by speech or by action, and thinks, that the object of its visit was left very obscure, and that my inference is necessarily drawn at random. He further asks—if that inference be correct, why, instead of appearing to me, it did not appear to Dennison and Riago, who might not have believed my story, but must have believed the evidence of their own senses?

many weeks had been there. Had the personage been human, we must have detected him. In mentioning this curious fact, and ascribing it to supernatural agency, I am fully sensible of the hazard of ridicule, which, in the present state of public opinion, I am incurring. But although I do not lay claim to the praise which Doctor Johnson yields to an author for his "magnanimity" in relating "a fact, however strange, if he himself believes it," I am acting on the principle that every man should possess, at least that moral courage which simply takes its stand on a fact, without either drawing from it any general inference, or placing it in direct opposition to the speculative opinion of another*.

The immediate consequence of this adventure, was to hasten our departure. On the following day, we reached Handitollah in safety; but the difficulties which I had to encounter, in order to avoid the snares laid by Dennison, to deter us from proceeding to Chandernagore, were numerous, and well nigh amounted to positive force. Frivolous excuses and pretences were resorted to, and he even called to his assistance some professors of the black art. On one occasion we discovered the magician in our bed-room, muttering his mantras over the head of our bed; at another time we found, under its foot, a small earthernware cistern, containing sundry magical spells. Still, however, Dennison continued to avow the most exalted friendship for me. At length, finding it impracticable to leave him with his own consent, and being unwilling to incur the consequences of his ungovernable passions, we secretly hired boats, and effected our escape, having left two notes,—one for him, the other for Riago, to apprize them of the motives which had actuated us. After a voyage of thirty-six hours, we

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* I afterwards conversed with Kishen Doss, on the subject of this unaccountable appearance. He informed me, that he was led to understand, from many intelligent persons of his Cast, that the fact of apparitions having, in former times, made their appearance, was undisputed; that such appearances, indeed, were then frequent; but that, of late years, and especially since Europeans had settled in the country, such phenomena were unknown, at least within their dominions†, for that, in the dark and unfrequented parts of the interior, beyond the limits of European sway, they were still not uncommon.—"But of this," he added, "I know nothing; I do not speak from experience; I merely give the received opinion on the subject. As for the low and ignorant, they believe any thing, however absurd, relative to supernatural agency."

† My sceptical friend says—"And no wonder; these oriental spirits vanish before the light of European philosophy."

reached our favourite cottage, at Chandernagore, in safety, happy to find ourselves once more under its humble roof, and grateful to Providence for protecting us amidst the perils which we had encountered since our absence from it.

In addition to the society of my respected friend, the Brahman, Kishen Doss, who continued his visits as regularly as formerly, I now enjoyed that of my facetious Madras acquaintance, Captain Harcourt. We casually met as we were enjoying the luxury of an evening's walk on the banks of the Hooghly. I found he had married a young Portuguese lady, and intended to spend the remainder of his days at Chandernagore. He introduced me to a friend of his, an amiable youth, named Keys, who had also been stricken with the arrows of Cupid, and lived with the object of his affections, a fine Hindoo girl, in a retired cottage, a mile to the westward. In the society of these friends, many a delightful hour was passed; and there was a similarity in our tastes and dispositions which daily strengthened the bonds of our affection. One evening, as I was walking with them, Virginia being busied in preparing tea, a person in a palanquin, attended by a numerous train of armed servants, passed me—it was Dennison. In my bosom rancour had never taken root; and conceiving that we had now nothing to fear, either from his wiles or his power, I asked him to accompany us home, and take some refreshment. He was *evidently* anxious to decline, but yielded to solicitation, and returned. On reaching home, I found Virginia seated in the verandah, and closely attended by three female domestics of our cottage. Chairs were handed, and we sat down, when Virginia beckoned to me as she retired to an adjoining apartment. —"Will you," said she, as soon as we were out of hearing, "promise me faithfully not to notice what I am about to relate?" —"Yes, certainly."—"Faithfully promise?"—"Yes."—"Then," said she, "scarcely had you left me, when I was surprised, as I was seated in the verandah, by the abrupt entrance of Dennison, attended by six armed men, three of whom, with their swords drawn, ranged themselves on each side of me. Having seated himself in a chair by my side, he told me he had come to take me away, as he could not possibly exist without me, and expressed a hope that I would not make it necessary for him to use many entreaties, as time was precious.—'Your husband,' said he, 'is poor; I am

I am rich, and both able and willing to settle a fortune upon you: I will be constant to you alone for ever, and love you most tenderly; therefore permit me to hand you into my palanquin. Do not mind your wardrobe—you will find one in readiness for you at Calcutta. Nay, do not hesitate, but,' (taking hold of my arm, and encircling my waist at the same time) 'come with me.' At this instant, the armed men gathered round, and my terror was so intense, that had not the idea of your being momentarily expected, supported me, I should have sunk senseless to the earth. With the view of gaining time, I resorted to stratagem, and requested he would grant me a few moments to consider; to this he assented, on the condition that in five minutes I should be prepared to give him my decision, and at once promise not to reveal what had passed. In the mean time, he would go, he said, and prepare the boat for me; and anticipating a decision in his favour, cautioned me to be ready in five minutes, and departed."

I heard no more. My indignation was no longer under control, my promise was forgotten, and, regardless of consequences, I rushed into the verandah, with a determination to wreak my vengeance upon the villain on the spot. But my astonishment and disappointment were extreme, to find his chair empty, and Harcourt and Keys vainly speculating as to the cause of his abrupt departure. He had, doubtless, anticipated the purport of our conference: guilt had disarmed him of courage; and for once in his life, Dennison was disappointed of his prey.

Habit had so familiarized me with the comforts of my cottage, and the society of my friends, that it would perhaps have been well for me, if I had never left the confines of this sweet and secluded habitation. I was content, nay happy; until I found my finances were diminishing to so low an ebb, as would soon compel me to leave my favourite seclusion, to seek employment in the world. From my heart would I lament the necessity, in bitter terms.—"Ah," thought I, "had I but a paltry thirty pounds a-year for life, my unambitious soul would rest satisfied, and I should be the happiest of men: the years of man are but few—Oh that I could remain those few years where I am, until the earth should cover this restless frame! Here we should know few cares, and fewer wants—here we should be at least as happy as we have been, and now are, and remain comparatively free from

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the temptations and misery attending us in active life—here we enjoy every rational luxury of human existence, and at little or no expense; our will is uncontrolled: we have health, and youth, our garden, and our books, especially the Bible, to call our reflection to the past, the present, and the future state of man. But the more I reflect, the more I lament the impossibility of ending my existence in these peaceful and happy shades." At length, I considered that man is sentenced to labour for his bread, and not born to a state of inactivity and idleness; that whatever is, is best, and that a cheerful resignation to the Divine Will is, after all, the truest practical philosophy.

As my funds diminished, my anxiety and restlessness increased in proportion. In many instances, I have remarked on the singular aid I have received from some unexpected quarter, when human assistance has been comparatively hopeless; and I have now to record another. As I was one day brooding over my circumstances, in a state bordering on despair, a letter was put into my hands: it was an invitation from Endtfield to proceed immediately to the west coast of Sumatra, where he had succeeded, he said, in procuring me an eligible appointment under Government, and at the same time, expressing his surprise that the receipt of his former letters had not been acknowledged. (They had evidently miscarried.) At this intelligence, I was agitated by conflicting feelings—joy and sorrow, hope and gloom. If I proceeded thither, I should, I found, be obliged to sacrifice all that was dear to me, by leaving Virginia behind, and by dispoing of many articles I possessed, more cherished indeed for memory's sake than for their intrinsic value. The latter therefore I did not so much mind; but to part with her, from whom I had not been separated since our union, was almost more than I could endure.

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lady, who kept a seminary in Calcutta, I sailed for Batavia in search of adventures, beginning, as it were, the world anew, with but thirty dollars in my pocket, the entire remnant of my former fortune. Here it will not, I am persuaded, be deemed by the reader improper, if I digress a little from my narrative, in order to say a few words relative to the Hindoos, on the occasion of my leaving their shores, after a sojourn there of so many of my youthful days.

The colour of the Hindoos is tawny, lighter or darker according to the degree in which they are exposed to the sun. Painters, and other artists whose profession admits of their working in the shade, are of a light copper hue, while palanquin-bearers, boatmen, coolies (porters), or agriculturists, are nearly as black as Caffres; but this is the only point of comparison: the hair of the Hindoo is long and glossy, and his features are as well proportioned as those of the European, only smaller and thinner. The dress of the Hindoo is simple in the extreme, being nothing more than a turban, and a single piece of cloth, uncut, about three yards long and one in width, which is wrapped round the loins, one end passing between the thighs and fastened behind, and the other, cast into folds, hanging negligently, but not ungracefully, in front. Bathing, therefore, which the rites of purity require to be performed more than once a-day, causes but little trouble to the wearer of such a garment. The Hindoo frequently wears golden ear-rings of various sizes, and slippers, which, in addressing or saluting a superior, he casts off; indeed, to pass the threshold of a habitation, even his own, with slippers on, or with any article of leather about the person, would be considered on all hands an enormous impropriety. In conversation, the Hindoos are fond of hyperbole, and fulsome adulation, frequently lauding one another, very gravely, face to face, far above their gods; but they are extremely patient and polite, scrupulously mindful not to contradict each other, nor so much as even to open their mouths by way of interruption; nay, to smile, to cough, or sneeze, while another is speaking, is deemed a high dereliction of good manners. Their opinion of Europeans is, I believe, far more favourable than it formerly was; but notwithstanding the advances we may have of late made in their good opinion, there are yet many and insuperable obstacles to entire confidence, which cannot so easily be over-

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come; and until overcome, they must look upon us, in most respects, with feelings of abhorrence and disgust. In the first place, they never can be brought to allow that Europeans are their superiors in the sciences and arts; and discoveries, or inventions not their own, they consider can neither be good nor useful. So general is this prejudice, that even those of them who speak the English tongue with fluency, are rarely seen with European books of science in their hands, because they cannot comprehend how any work can contain an atom of information which is not to be found in books of their own. They do, however, confess our superiority in some respects: in particular, they admire the humanity with which we carry on war—the moderation and impartiality with which we govern; and acknowledge our good qualities of benevolence and liberality: but among the virtues, they are quick in detecting the countervailing vices, so as to lose sight of these favourable impressions, and, on the whole, to view us in no other light than as a barbarous nation. They feel hideous disgust and horror on witnessing a European feeding on the flesh of a cow, the slaughter of one being considered by them more appalling than murder even, and to eat it, more detestable than feeding on a human carcass. Then again, they who imagine they have contracted a stain, if but the shadow of a Pariah passes athwart them, and must immediately wash themselves—see Europeans admit him into their domestic service, and even keep women of that vile tribe as servants, or in a more degraded capacity. The wife of the respectable Hindoo dares not sit down in his presence; nor has he ever known, or imagined, that persons of the female sex, with the exception of common prostitutes, can "amble and caper." What then must he think, when he beholds European women laugh, play, and toy, shamelessly with the men, and even join them, without blushing, in the dance? He too, who would be consigned to the most degrading punishment for a single act of intemperance—who has been taught to view it as the most infamous of vices, and the most debasing to human nature, frequently sees Europeans in a shameless state of intoxication, some of whom indeed appear to consider drunkenness as a gallant feat. The dress also of Europeans is revolting to them; it is in their eyes monstrous and disgusting, particularly boots and gloves, leather, and the skins of animals, being considered by them of so impure a nature,

a-nature, that they must wash after touching them; nor do they understand how Europeans can wear, or even handle, the skin of a beast. These prejudices may be natural; but however heartily they may abhor or deride us in secret, they have always the cunning and address to make themselves appear, in the eyes of the European, as entertaining far different feelings. It would perhaps be illiberal, if not unjust, not to take for granted the sincerity of their professions sometimes; and to speak individually, I have much more to say in their praise, than to their prejudice. Many of them, I can safely affirm, possess highly sensitive feelings; and I shall never forget the expression of benevolence which beamed in the features of Kishen Doss, on my telling him that I had a father, a mother, brothers, and sisters; but that, from my infancy upwards, I had been a stranger to them, and to the tender ties and endearments of a home;—the expression of his eye was indeed beautiful! it beamed benevolence and sensibility, and his countenance altogether bespoke the feelings of a good and amiable heart; but, independently of Kishen Doss, I never failed to receive from Hindoos of respectability, that courteous, delicate attention, which is so gratifying to the feelings of a stranger in a foreign land, and which, as experienced by me in India, did, and ever will, impress me strongly in favour of the people.

The colour of the Hindoo women, like that of the men, varies from the same cause, such as are not exposed to the sun being extremely fair. They have long, beautiful, glossy hair, in general small but pretty features, remarkably fine eyes, with regular teeth, and delicate voluptuous lips. In stature they are small, but their limbs are extremely well proportioned, and their walk dignified; an erect mien, with a measured graceful step, apparently proceeding from something inherent in their nature, and seldom failing to impress the beholder with admiration and respect. Their dress too, like that of the men, is of an entire piece; it is about nine or ten yards in length, and a yard broad. The Brahman women wrap the end round the body two or three times, forming a tight petticoat, falling in front as low as the feet, while women of other Casts fasten the web differently, another part of the cloth passing over the head, shoulders, and breast. By many authors they are represented in a point of view different from that in which the Abbé Dubois speaks of them. He says—" The Hin-

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the temptations and misery attending us in active life—here we enjoy every rational luxury of human existence, and at little or no expense; our will is uncontrolled: we have health, and youth, our garden, and our books, especially the Bible, to call our reflection to the past, the present, and the future state of man. But the more I reflect, the more I lament the impossibility of ending my existence in these peaceful and happy shades." At length, I considered that man is sentenced to labour for his bread, and not born to a state of inactivity and idleness; that whatever is, is best, and that a cheerful resignation to the Divine Will is, after all, the truest practical philosophy.

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consider justifiable, consistently with their impartial views of policy, and with the pledge by which they are bound not to interfere directly with the religious prejudices of the natives. If they have not entirely succeeded, it is to the strength of those prejudices that the failure is mainly to be attributed. During the short period of nine months, I witnessed no less than three of these horrible sacrifices, all of them having taken place within a few miles of Chandernagore. A description of one will give the reader an accurate idea of them all: but it may be proper first to inquire into the origin of this horrible rite, and into the motives which influence the deluded victims in the performance of it.

Some authors have pronounced it to proceed from a dread on the part of the husband, that the discontented wife would seek occasion to procure his death; but this insinuation is now found to be misplaced. Nor is the act to be ascribed to affection, (although it invariably forms the ostensible pretext), but, on the one hand, to the miserable condition of the widow herself, who is doomed to a state of celibacy, and wretched dependence and constraint during the remainder of her life; and to vanity inspiring her with the hope of renown; and, on the other, to the solicitations of relations, who well know that so splendid a death will redound to the everlasting honour of the family.

By becoming a Suttee, a woman is canonized after death; and vows are paid to her. After the fire has consumed the body, the remnants of the bones are collected, and a pyramid or monument is erected over the spot, to transmit to posterity the memory of so illustrious a victim of conjugal attachment; and, indeed, when the ceremony is over, the woman who has submitted to this glorious death, is considered in the light of a deity. Crowds of votaries daily visit her shrine, imploring her protection, and praying for deliverance from "the ills of life." When once a woman has declared gravely and deliberately, that she is desirous to be consumed alive by the side of the dead body of her husband, she cannot retract. Here revocation would be disregarded; it being a prevailing superstition throughout all India, that if a woman, after having taken her resolution, refuse to fulfil it, the whole

of these papers, while it affords important instruction, must be distressing to the feelings of every benevolent mind.

whole country in which she lives would be visited by some dreadful calamity. The Brahmans invariably preside, and are very active at the ceremony; but the Brahman women have long since discontinued the practice of Suttee, the females of Rajahs, and of the lower castes, being usually the victims.

It was about noon, on a sultry day, when curiosity prompted me to follow a vast concourse of Hindoos, who were taking a westerly direction. I soon found that the object of attraction was a Suttee, and although I had before witnessed two exhibitions of the kind, I determined to proceed. On reaching the spot, I observed that the preparations were nearly complete. The pile was raised five feet above the ground, into which some bamboo sticks had been driven, for the purpose of supporting the layers of dry firewood, and other combustibles, such as straw, rosin, ghee or butter, and pitch. On the pile lay stretched the corpse of the deceased Hindoo, dressed as when he was alive, and covered with a piece of white calico. The crowd was immense; but in compliment to my nation, the chokedars * obligingly cleared a passage for me, and I had a distinct view of the whole ceremony. The victim was in a palanquin, on the opposite side of the pile, supported by her friends; her relations, who were armed with muskets, sabres, and other weapons, guarded the pile; and numerous men, bearing tum-tums, and other noisy instruments, were standing round. Even thus early, the impression on my mind, as I stood among the abettors of this revolting ceremony, was awful in the extreme. The victim being apprized, by a guru or priest, that it was time to begin the rites, numbers of Brahmans, with lighted torches in their hands, and earthen pots of oil and ghee, took their stations round the pile, while others recited mantras, or prayers, in a loud voice, and consecrated the pile, by sprinkling it with pure water. The crowd having given way, my expectation of seeing the victim, whom I observed to be advancing with a slow, but firm step, supported by some Brahmans and her friends, in the direction of the spot in which I was standing, was now at its height. She was of the age of about forty-five, a well-made woman, and rather handsome; her neck, fingers, arms, and legs, were loaded with

* A chokedar is a constable, or watchman.

with a profusion of ornaments, chiefly of gold, and her whole attire was as gay as if the occasion were festive; and so, indeed, in her estimation, it appeared to be; her countenance was in keeping with her general appearance, pleasing, and even cheerful; nor did it express other trait of concern than a paleness, and a slight quivering of the under lip. As she approached the pile, the spectators, particularly the women, went up to her, to wish her joy, and implore a blessing from her before her departure to the mansions of Paradise. To all she made answers, and to some she gave rice; such as were not near enough to receive any from her, caught, with eagerness, the grains which she scattered around, and in the air, and which seemed to be prized as a relic. All this time there was a buzz of adoration from the infatuated multitude, who beheld her with a degree of awe inspired by the belief that she was a divinity, and some even prostrated themselves at her feet. Three times she walked round the pile, scattering rice around and above her, the Brahmans uttering their mantras, and the people adoring her. Every thing being now ready, she took a farewell of her nearest relations, distributing among them her ornaments. She then mounted the pile with astonishing coolness, seated herself next the corpse, which she fervently embraced with both her arms, put some rice in its mouth, and for the last time, scattered some among the spectators. She was then bound to the dead body with two easy bandages, and a quantity of straw, rosin, butter, and oil, was strewed over her and the corpse. A lighted torch was then handed to her, which she held in one hand, while with the other she emptied a pot of oil over her head; this done, she threw the torch on the pile. In an instant the pile was set on fire in ten or twelve different places, and the flames rose with a rapidity and intensity of heat (the Brahmans continually pouring on oil and butter), which must have consumed the victim almost immediately; indeed she was not seen to move a limb after she had laid herself down. The noise of the tum-tums, the shrieks of the women, and the shouts of the spectators, were such as to defy description, and even exceed conception; so that, had her resolution failed, her loudest cries for succour would have been unavailing. The flames towered into the atmosphere, to an immense height, and in a few minutes

minutes not a vestige of fire remained—not even embers; ashes, dust, and a column of smoke, were the only indications of the rite which had been performed. Such was the end of a woman, who, instead of living to serve and adorn society, thus became the victim of a cruel and barbarous superstition.

The ceremony of suttee varies in different districts, but throughout the east is fundamentally the same. But India is not the only country in which this abominable rite has prevailed. Ancient authors speak of it as not unknown, in early times, in other parts of the globe. Herodotus, in particular, speaking of the Crestonæans, asserts, that the women disputed with each other the honour of dying with their husbands. The Hindoos, however, seem to be the only people who have continued the practice up to this day. But in recording the superstitions of the Hindoos, or those of any other nation, we must do so rather "in sorrow than in anger." Such, and perhaps still more degrading, were the superstitions of our ancestors; and in such should we ourselves be sunk, but for the undeserved gift of Revelation, imparted to us by the Father of Light, for the purpose of rescuing us from the thick darkness in which our forefathers wandered: thanks then be to Him for that inestimable blessing!

To proceed in my narrative:—Wafted by a gentle north-east breeze, we crossed the equator five weeks after leaving Hindoostan, and in a few days afterwards, entered the Straits of Sunda, steering due east. Nothing in nature can surpass the beauty of these straits; they are studded with myriads of small islands, of an oval shape, which greet the eye of the voyager in every direction, and produce a diversity of scenic effect, highly interesting. In exploring these regions, the excitement which the mind receives from novelty alone, affords in itself no ordinary gratification; and never, in the Straits of Sunda, does the voyager feel the pain of disappointed expectation. The sea, bounded to the north by the Sumatra shore, and to the south by Java, seldom rises higher than a gentle curl; and our bark sailed along, wafted by odoriferous gales, amid the surrounding beauty, considerably heightened by the reflection around from the effulgence of the atmosphere, until the ships at anchor in Batavia roads appeared in sight. Malays then came off in canoes, with parrots, Java sparrows,

rows, fruit, and curiously wrought mats, for sale. I felt a desire to purchase one of the mats, of a fine and curious texture, but considering that my thirty dollars would be materially diminished thereby, I prudently resolved not to part with a single stiver. After we came to an anchor, the captain obligingly favoured me with his boat, and I soon reached the entrance of a river, on the banks of which, at the distance of two miles, stands the princely and luxuriant city of Batavia.

Batavia, which is the capital of Java, and of the Dutch possessions in the East Indies, affords a striking specimen of Asiatic opulence and luxury. But it is perhaps the most unhealthy place in the universe, and is proclaimed, and not without justice, the "grave of Europeans." A fever carries off a whole family in the morning, and they are buried in one grave in the evening. The Dutch, ever addicted to canals, have formed several in this city, as in Batavia in Europe, and it is to this cause that the unhealthy state of the town is mainly attributed:—the stagnant state of these, and of the adjacent marshy ground and pools, with which the country abounds,—the noxious vapours ushered in by the morning sea breezes—together with inattention to cleanliness on the part of the inhabitants—all, doubtless, contribute to the fatal pestilence continually raging there. Europeans consider the segar an excellent preservative, and they eat and drink freely, heedless of danger. The merchants reside in country seats, a few miles from Batavia, where the air is considered to be as pure and healthy as in Europe, the city itself being the fatal seat of pestilence. The country seats are superb, the gardens being tastefully laid out, and ornamented with sculpture, while the interior of almost every house displays costly lustres and mirrors, corresponding with the general magnificence. The roads are upon a scale of grandeur which astonishes the European fresh from his native soil. The market abounds with good fish, fowl, vegetables, and plenty of fruit. The city of Batavia was taken by the British forces in the late war, but afterwards ceded to the Dutch, in conformity to the treaty of peace; but the Javanese are decidedly inimical to the Dutch sway, as are, indeed, the Malay people generally throughout India, which circumstance frequently involves the government in turbulent and expensive broils. The Chinese inhabitants

bitants are so numerous as to constitute, it is said, nearly one-third of the population*. In the whole, Batavia is a most superb city—a secondary Bagdat.

On entering the river, a Javanese on horseback, who was waiting for us on its bank, threw us a rope, which being fastened to the bow of our boat, he trotted off, towing us along at a rapid rate, until we reached the city. I then landed, followed by a lascar, carrying my trunk, my thirty dollars being wrapped carefully in paper, and placed with extraordinary precaution in my pocket. The first human beings I beheld were European soldiers, and their appearance instantly warned me of the unhealthiness of the spot I had landed in. They looked more like skeletons than men:—each the "grim tyrant" personified;—and on the visage they bore a pale yellow tinge, which, together with the "lack-lustre eye" sunk deep in the socket, gave them an appearance, absolutely appalling: I involuntarily shuddered at the sight of them, reflecting on the probability of my soon being in the same state. To these crawling emblems of death, however, I advanced, and requested to know the direction to a tavern. The vacant stare—the shrug of the shoulders—brought to mind the singular predicament which Goldsmith must have found himself on his arrival in Holland to teach the natives English, on discovering that he must first learn to speak Dutch. I proceeded forward, when three other shades of men appeared in advance: those also I addressed, but still no answer could I obtain, while the reigning stillness of the city impressed me with a mournful sensation, discouraging to my hopes, and foreboding, I thought, a gloomy sojourn in the place.

Onward, however, I advanced, until at length I beheld before me, to my infinite delight, a sign, "The Dutchman's head," suspended in front of a splendid hotel; thither I bent my steps, and found the landlord seated in front of the house, and he invited me, (to my agreeable surprise in broken English), to "volk

* In 1740, twenty thousand Chinese were barbarously massacred by the Dutch, without the smallest offence having ever been proved against them. The massacre was too unprovoked and detestable to be defended, even by the Netherlands government, who, when the governor arrived in Europe, sent him back, to be tried in Batavia; but he has never been heard of since.

"volk in." My primary object was to agree for my board; this was soon settled, at the rate of three dollars per day—a sum, however, which placed my little stock of cash in jeopardy of soon disappearing altogether. Having placed my trunk in a bedroom allotted to me, and discharged the lascar who carried it, I strolled into the billiard-room, the dining-room, and coffee-room, all of them on a scale of splendid magnificence, and full of Dutchmen, one Englishman only, besides myself, being in the hotel, and he, I understood, labouring under a derangement of intellect. Observing a number of Dutchmen standing in an ante-room, waiting for the welcome announcement of "dinner," I bent my steps thither, in the hope of meeting with one who could speak English; nor was I disappointed—a middle-aged military officer accosted me, and in broken English, inquired as to the then state of Europe, —then spoke of Buonaparte,—and informed me that he himself had fought and bled on the field of "Vaterloo;" speaking of which, he observed—"De Duke of Vellington's army was all in confusion: de Duke vas all in de wrong! and he vould lose de battle, if von vary clever Hollander had not come in de vay, and told him vat to do: if it vas not for dis man—dis vary clever man, *Vanderbenholderstein*, de Duke of Vellington would have lost every ting in de vorld!" At that instant dinner was announced, and I bent my steps towards the dining-room, marvelling greatly at the profound wisdom of the said *Vanderbenholderstein*, but still more that I had never before heard mention even of his name.

I was naturally anxious to be seated next my countryman, deranged as he was, and watched my opportunity. I fortunately succeeded, and found that he was a surgeon in the army: his discourse was so rational, and his manners so mild, gentlemanly, and well-bred, that I seriously doubted the fact of his being deranged; indeed, during dinner-time the only instance of singularity I observed in his conduct was, that every now and then he would slyly pinch the arm of the Dutchman, who was seated on his left-hand, and then burst out into a violent roar of laughter. Mynheer, however, took it all in good part, well knowing the malady his tormentor was afflicted with. The dinner consisted of an abundant supply of fish, poultry, wines, and liqueurs; and the cloth being removed, a song was called for, and the request

quest was instantly complied with by one of the party, all joining vociferously, but with admirable uniformity, in the chorus. Shortly after, a Malay girl attired in the costume of the country, and of course bare-legged, entered the room with a guitar, and seating herself next to me, played and sang, in a soft, melodious strain, several favourite Malay airs. So enchanting was the melody, that we sat listening attentively for some time, and it was not until a late hour that we retired to rest.

On the following morning I was anxious to proceed to the residence of the captain of an English ship, then on the eve of departure for Padang, for the purpose of obtaining a passage; but my chagrin was extreme to find, that the hire of a carriage was indispensible, it being a positive stigma for a European to be seen *walking* in the streets of Batavia. Although I could not but grieve at an expensive sacrifice to tyrant custom, I was compelled to yield to necessity; and a carriage being sent for, the hire of which was four dollars, I rode towards the captain's residence, condemning, most heartily, a custom so absurd in itself and, in my case, so productive of evil.

I found the captain at home; he was in his dressing-gown, and eating radishes, with which he supplied himself from a sideboard. Having invited me to breakfast, he swallowed some coffee, and handed me some fruit, cold beef, ham, tongue, and water-cresses (gaping and yawning wide all the time). Having thus employed himself for nearly half-an-hour, he apologized for his absence for a moment, and retired; he soon re-entered the room, sprucely dressed, and followed by attendants with,—breakfast-things! It was a maxim with me abroad never to appear surprised at any thing, but to take whatever oddities I might meet with in my travels, as things of course: so down we sat to a regular breakfast of,—eggs, toast, coffee, tea, ham, beef, radishes, water-cresses, and fruit,—consisting of mangoes, plantains, bananas, the jack-fruit, and mangosteens *; but

* The mangosteen is considered, and with justice, the most delicious fruit in the world; it is enclosed in a shell, is white, and round, and abounds with rich, sweet, and highly-flavoured juice. The mango is larger, of a yellow colour, and has a flat oval stone in the middle: it is also delicious, though in my opinion inferior to the mangosteen. The jack-fruit, pumaloes, bananas, and plantains, are likewise pleasing and refreshing to the palate.

but I confess I could with difficulty withhold the expression of my surprise, when two smoking dishes, one of boiled rice, the other of fried fish, borne by two lascars, were placed upon the table! After all, the best thing I procured by this invitation was a promise, by the captain, of a free passage in his ship to Padang, which was to sail in a few days. I then returned to the tavern; and on entering the dining-room, found the doctor in warm dispute on a political point, with a little Dutchman, who maintained his argument stoutly, and in a tone of haughty insolence, which roused the doctor's choler to such a degree, that he fairly saluted the Dutchman's seat of "honour" with three tremendous kicks. An immediate "set-to" was the consequence, in the presence of twenty Dutchmen who were seated round the room, and who certainly witnessed the ludicrous scene with inflexible gravity. By some means the Dutchman succeeded in getting the doctor down, and in that state, "peppered" away at his face, to an astounding shout of—"*Bravo!*" from all the Dutchmen in the room. This sample of foul play, however, calling upon me, as I considered, to interfere in behalf of my countryman, I advanced, amid a perfect stillness, and grasping the doctor round the waist, lifted him on his legs. The action now recommenced; but in this round, the doctor contrived to get the head of his antagonist beneath his left arm, and to keep it there, as tight as if it were in a blacksmith's vice, belabouring it with determined ferocity with his right fist, until Mynheer, blubbering like a great girl, and his face streaming with blood, extricated himself, and ran fairly out of the room. I was secretly rejoiced at this result of the battle, while the Dutchmen were equally chagrined, and vented their petulance and vexation by vociferating—"*Vive Napoleon!*" The doctor, however, calmly seated himself in the verandah, and thus the mighty affair ended.

It was usual with me to stroll about the town after sunset, to enjoy the luxury of a walk. On one of these occasions, my attention was attracted by an amphitheatre, in the front of which a crowd of natives had assembled, to witness the performance of some Chinese votaries of Thespis, who played their parts with singular adroitness in the open air. The dialogue of the piece, which was in Chinese, and had evidently a comic tendency, was

supported by two men and two females, but the countenances of the multitude disdained to evince a single symptom of merriment, until some gross show of indecency was resorted to in the action of the performers: this was frequently done, and never failed to raise a simultaneous grin of applause. Leaving this extraordinary scene, I walked leisurely homeward, calculating the state of my dollars to a nicety, when a Malay, stealing secretly behind me, under cover of the night, seized my hat, and decamped, with the fleetness of a roe; I instantly gave chace, but in vain. This loss was a severe one, and proved well-nigh irreparable; the price of a beaver hat being no less than twenty dollars: I was therefore reluctantly compelled to purchase, as a substitute for my fine beaver, a mean, black chip hat, the price of even that being ten dollars. This incident prevented my taking any more nocturnal rambles at Batavia. In a few days I set sail, and arrived in a fortnight at Padang, with but one dollar in the world.

Padang is situated at the distance of a mile and a half up a river, navigable only by boats, and is a picturesque Malay village: some of the houses are constructed of wood, others of bamboos and mats. The most remarkable feature in this little settlement (now in the possession of the Dutch), is its romantic scenery, mountains, hills, islands, and waterfalls, which indeed afford its chief and most interesting recommendation. The articles of importation are, piece goods, chintses, palampores, wheat, and European luxuries, such as wine, beer, hams, and cheeses: gold-dust and pepper constitute the returns. I instantly repaired to Endtfield's, by whom I was no sooner observed, than he convinced me I was recognised, by embracing me with the fervour of a parent.—"Indeed, Naufragus," said he, "I am heartily glad to see you!—we had all given you up, concluding you were either already provided for, or by this time an inhabitant of another planet: here—this is my wife—my daughter—my son." In short, the good man's reception was that of a father; which convinced me of the worth of a truly religious heart, however the world may deride or despise it. After tea we sat together in a magnificent verandah, when, at the particular request of Endtfield, I related all that had befallen me since our separation; but not without continued interruptions of—"Bless me!"

—"Dear

—"Dear me!"—Indeed!"—"My gracious!" and at the conclusion, he said—"In good truth, Naufragus, you have undergone extraordinary trials for your age. Bless me! you seem to be the tennis-ball of fortune. Let me see, let me see, now, what's best to be done. I have succeeded, but with no small difficulty, in keeping the appointment at Bencoolen, vacant, at least I have reason to hope so: thither you must immediately repair. Make not yourself uneasy, Naufragus; Fortune may yet smile upon you. You are still young; so is your wife; and if her affection for you is sincere, she will wait patiently until you are able to send for her. Bless me! when I was married, I was younger than you are;—only a wedding-dinner the richer, which was a piece of roast beef—but even that pittance, Fortune (the jade!) denied me; for when my back was turned,—before even we had tasted the meat, my house-dog fairly decamped with the whole of it! Now, you see, I'm rich: well then, cheer up, Naufragus—'*Nil desperandum,*' and all may yet be well!" I was about to reply, when a cold aguish fit, set my teeth chattering. I found, too soon, it was the Batavia fever, the latent cause of which I had unconsciously brought with me from that pestilential place, and which had now broken out upon me. Endtfield instantly hired a bungalow, and procured me every requisite assistance; but for the space of six weeks, I was totally unconscious of surrounding objects. The only sensation I was susceptible of, was, that of burning with thirst, and being stretched on a mossy bank beneath a waterfall, gaping wide to catch a drop to cool my parched tongue,—but the tormenting liquid rolling down, turned aside, and still deceived me. My constitution got the better of the disease, and the first day I was able to walk, I attempted to reach the habitation of my friend Endtfield; but, on my way, a Malay horseman at full speed, knocked me down, and galloping over me, continued his course. The natives flocked round, and assisted me with the feelings of true Samaritans; but so great was the injury I had sustained, that it was not until the expiration of another month, that I could again venture abroad, when my appearance exactly resembled that of the Europeans I had first seen on landing at Batavia. Endtfield having procured me a passage to Bencoolen,

 and

and favoured me with letters, I embarked, deeply affected at the recollection of his kindness ;—at a time when suffering under the affliction of sickness, and in a foreign land, the heart is perhaps most susceptible of kind and good offices.

Bencoolen being distant only two hundred and forty miles from the equator, is sultry almost beyond endurance; and is subject to severe earthquakes. At the period of my arrival (1815), it was the seat of the Company's government on the west coast of Sumatra; but it has since been ceded to the Netherlands government. The fortress called "Fort Marlborough," is considered one of great strength; it commands the only good landing-place in the settlement, the whole line of the coast being protected by a tremendous surf. The sun has such power in this settlement, that a piece of raw meat placed on a cannon at mid-day, would be thoroughly broiled in a few minutes. The town is not large; but the houses of the European inhabitants are compact, cleanly, and comfortable. The surrounding country is as romantic and picturesque as any perhaps in the world; and on the sea beach in the evening a most luxurious walk may be enjoyed, sun-set presenting, in fine weather, a spectacle of great splendour. The nutmeg plantations also afford a delightful prospect, the number of the trees in different plantations, varying from five thousand to fifteen thousand: they are planted in parallel rows, at a distance of thirteen feet asunder. The outer covering of the nutmeg is of about the size of a peach, and bears an appearance very much resembling that fruit. When the nutmeg ripens, it cracks on one side, the aperture gradually widening, until the nutmeg is to be seen in the centre of its coating, entwined with fresh mace of a red colour. It is altogether an object pleasing to the eye, and refreshing to the smell; and from its value well deserves care and attention. Here I had the pleasure of getting acquainted with a gentleman, whom I must designate as one of the ornaments of the settlement, and indeed of human nature: I mean the benevolent William Basket, Esq. Having resided in the settlement in the capacity of a merchant, nearly thirty years, he had not only acquired wealth, but had so gained the confidence and affections of the natives, that in case of any dispute, they would flock from distant parts of the interior to him, for judgment, and invariably abide

abide by his decision. The exercise of his benevolence was not, however, confined to the natives; his table was always at the service of his European brethren, poor, as well as rich; and his heart and purse were open to the needy and destitute, who often found shelter under his roof. He was remarkable for equanimity of temper, and his name was always associated with virtue. To this worthy man I was recommended by Endtfield, and was freely invited to partake of the hospitalities of his house and table. The introductory letters which I had received from Endtfield were forwarded to Government, and in a few days I received an appointment. I now cherished the hope of being settled for life, and looked forward with transport to the period when I should be able to send for Virginia, to partake of my good fortune. A rumour about this time obtained that we were shortly to have a new governor, in the person of that highly talented and popular individual—the late Honourable Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. From this rumour emanated various speculations as to projected alterations in the administration of the settlement; but that the appointment would lead to increase of business, and consequently of emoluments, no doubt whatever was entertained.

Three years and upwards had I held an agreeable employment in this settlement, and had nearly acquired a sufficiency to enable me to send to Calcutta for my young wife, who had evinced admirable constancy in her correspondence, when, on the twenty-second March, 1818, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles did actually arrive and take charge of the government. So far, however, were my sanguine expectations from being realized, that myself, and many others, were doomed to suffer the pain of actual, and, as we considered, unmerited dismission, in consequence of the introduction into the settlement of an entirely new and economical system of administration. The persons who were most immediately interested in this change, assembled at Basket's, looking to him as to a common father, all with gloomy countenances, and many with empty purses.

This event furnished me with new evidence of the uncertainty of every thing under the sun.—"Ah!" thought I, "without doubt, I am doomed to endure a life of trial, vexation, and dis-

 appointment:

appointment: I am still to be tantalized with hopes, but to feel the torture of their defeat; nor can I ever expect to be at rest on earth, or to attain my wishes." The good man, Basket, however, observed my uneasiness, and accosted me in terms of encouragement:—" This, I allow," said he, " is a sad event, Naufragus; but Government will, I suppose, provide for you; if not here, in Calcutta, or perhaps in Europe; so keep up your spirits; rely upon it, Government will not discard you. Apply for a certificate of your services, your conduct, and the cause of your dismission; and if you prefer your claims, either in Bengal or in England, they will doubtless be attended to." Thanking him from my heart, I complied with his advice. A highly flattering certificate was immediately granted: and I prepared to embark for Calcutta, in a ship then on the eve of departure, with a view to prefer my claims to the Bengal government.

I cannot, however, quit Bencoolen, without saying a few words regarding the new system of administration introduced by Sir T. S. Raffles. In suddenly dispensing with the services of so many persons, who were unable to procure immediate employment, he threw a burden upon the settlement, and caused much personal suffering: but with reference to the latter effect, it may fairly be presumed that he did violence to his own benevolent feelings; for, by all accounts, a more susceptible or tender heart than his, never beat in the breast of man; and, on the whole, he no doubt acted for the public good, considering the measure as one, at least, of expediency: he might even have had in prospect that which has since taken place—the total abandonment of the settlement; and if so, the actual *necessity* of the measure must, to him, have been apparent. Be that, however, as it may, it is certain, and must be acknowledged, that his general administration had for its chief object the interests of the East India Company, in connexion with the moral improvement of the people, and the prosperity of the colony. Among those measures of Sir T. S. Raffles which merit to be recorded, are the establishment of native schools—the encouragement of the cultivation of grain—and the institution of a court called the " Pangaran's Court," at the head of which he presided in person, conjointly with the native chiefs, distributing justice fairly and impartially among

among all ranks of the people. He abolished cock-fighting, which was before publicly sanctioned; and, above all, he set on foot active measures with the view to prevent the infamous traffic in slaves, not only at Bencoolen, but in every island and spot in the Eastern Archipelago; and at Bencoolen, he himself made the experiment of emancipation. For a detailed and very satisfactory account of those measures, as well as for a full, highly-interesting and correct retrospect of his administration and general character, the reader is referred to a memoir of him, which has appeared in the annual volume of Biography, published by Longman and Co. on the first of January, 1827. I cannot here refrain from offering a few brief observations on slavery, digressing from my narrative for the last time.

In the performance of my official duties, I had to superintend the landing of the Company's stores, when numerous opportunities were afforded me of forming a just conception of the nature of slavery, as well as of witnessing the condition of the Company's slaves, who were employed in this task, their number amounting to upwards of two hundred. My experience confirms the conclusions of all legitimate reasoning on the subject;—that the state of slavery is a radical evil, inasmuch as it tends to debase the human mind, and to even place it on a level with the lower instincts of the brute. Of the treatment of the slaves of this colony, I need only observe (what perhaps is too evident), that cruelty, is the characteristic of all barbarous or uncivilized people armed with authority. But, for the sake of argument, even granting the slave to be well fed, well clothed, and well treated—still, as it respects the mind, the evil is equally degrading, and its tendency to engender vice, remains as powerful as ever. This truth was never perhaps more completely illustrated than in the Company's slaves: they were as well treated as free men; but many of them so debased, and stupid, as to reject the boon of freedom offered them by Sir T. S. Raffles; and all so vicious, that murder, theft, promiscuous intercourse, intoxication, and every disgusting feature of vice and immorality, appeared among them.

On departing from Bencoolen, I wrote an affectionate farewell letter to Mr. Endtfield; nor could I leave Basket and other

esteemed friends, without feeling deep and painful regret. Those delightful and romantic bowers too, which my soul was, as it were, enamoured of—the sea beach—the roaring of the fretful surge, become so familiar to me, as to be music to my ear—every tree and hut, with which there was some agreeable association in my memory—the glens and plains—the hills and grottoes, which I had traversed, musing on my past years and future destiny—these, all these, I was to leave for ever, instead of passing the remainder of my days among them, with the wife of my youth, in peace and happiness, as my heart had fondly flattered itself. Indeed, had I not received the consolation of knowing that I was going to meet her whom I valued more than life, I should have been absolutely wretched. As it was, I was borne away from Sumatra's shore, only rich in my certificate, and a few hundred dollars which I had saved. So used was I to disappointment, that on my passage I cherished the most gloomy apprehensions, which, however, were occasionally relieved by the conviction, that if by any chance they should be falsified, the more welcome would be my good fortune. Virginia was anxiously awaiting my arrival; and we met after an absence of three years, with less alteration in appearance on her part than on mine, the Batavia fever having left its traces on my countenance—certainly without any in our affections.

If I was afflicted with more than ordinary trials, I was gifted by nature with a more than ordinary share of perseverance; so that the more discouraging the prospects,—the greater the difficulty, the greater energy would I exert in my endeavours to surmount it. Immediately therefore on arriving at Calcutta, I laid my case in writing before the then governor-general, the late Marquis of Hastings. To my indescribable joy, I received in reply an official communication to the effect—"That Mr. Secretary A—— was directed to provide for Naufragus, on the first opportunity that might offer." Three months did my patience feed on the hope with which this high-sounding communication inspired me. At the end of that time, not having heard any thing further, I resolved to wait on Mr. Secretary A——. On entering his room, he immediately rose, and politely offered me a chair; nay, to such a delicate extent was his politeness carried, that I began to doubt

whether

whether I was really soliciting a favour, or had to confer one. "No opportunity had as *yet*," he said, "offered; but he believed Mr. S—— had a vacancy;" and being favoured by Mr. A—— with a letter, I was soon in the presence of Mr. S——, whom I found suffering under a tormenting gout. Desiring me to be seated, he read the letter, and having finished, he exclaimed—"Ah, what pity! this place, young man, was filled up but yesterday evening—how unlucky! had you but called yesterday, you might have had it. But stay—I think—no! however, here," writing, and folding a note, "are a few lines to my friend Mr. Secretary M——; I think *he* has a vacancy." Cordially thanking him, I waited on Mr. Secretary M——, who, having read the note, smiled so good-naturedly, that I said to myself—"Ah, I am sure of something now!" and ventured to express a hope that he could find occasion for my services. He said, still smiling—"Oh, nothing more easy! Give my compliments to Mr. Ochme of the general department, and [smiling] ask him if he cannot make room for you." Away I flew, like a bird with a joyful peck-piece in its bill for a fond mate, to Mr. Ochme. "Oh," said he, "Mr. M—— must be dreaming! we have more here than we require, and, at least, five hundred names on our list!" With this astounding intimation, I returned to Mr. Secretary M——. "Indeed!" said he; "well, [smiling] I am sor—ry—for—it! but I think my friend L—— may have a sly corner vacant for you; you shall have a letter to him." So saying, he gave me the letter, while I overwhelmed him with thanks; and thanks, although I never found them very prolific of good, are at least innocent of harm. Mr. Secretary L—— told me that he was exceedingly sorry; but to give me hopes, would be but deceiving me—"Indeed," said he, "I am *very* sorry!" and such was the apparent sincerity of tone and manner with which his sorrowful expressions were accompanied, that I actually began to feel as much uneasiness for him, as for myself; and, on my return home, could not but feel most seriously, how poignant his sorrow must have been! I had scarcely time to reflect on the probable consequences of my ill-success, when a letter from my father came to hand, announcing that my uncle Barron had heard of my severe losses, and had written to some opulent merchants in India to promote my interest.

terest. This intelligence I at first thought too good to be realised; but the tendency of the human mind to believe what it wishes to be true, superseded all reasoning on the subject; and the news, improbable as it was, acting upon a sanguine temperament, served to raise my hopes to the highest pitch of excitement. A day or two had elapsed since this period, when, to my infinite joy, a note was brought me, from the opulent firm of Messrs. Fairlie, Fergusson and Co. politely intimating a wish to see me immediately, if possible. I flew to their office all anxiety and expectation, and introduced myself to Mr. Fergusson, who received me with a cordiality which would have set at rest the fears of the most timid.—"Without doubt," thought I, "my uncle has relented; and I am now to enjoy the fruit of his benevolence."—"Well, Naufragus," said Mr. Fergusson, "I am informed that fortune has been unkind to you of late."—"Very true! indeed, sir, very true!" (every moment anxiously expecting the announcement of my uncle's name).—"That's pity! I have—" ("Yes?") "a little *bill* outstanding against you, as owner of your brig—it's only sixty rupees, and you can let us have it as soon as convenient, if you please."—"Ah!" thought I, with a deep sigh, "I will never more venture to hope for fortune's favours.—Good day! Mr. Fergusson, I certainly will settle it as soon as I am able," and returned home more grieved and disappointed at heart, than I think I had ever before been.

My finances again failing me, I now became disgusted with India, and resolved to leave it for ever!—that country which, having held out to me the expectation of prosperity, had allured my youthful fancy with fond hopes, but to deceive them. With the view of effecting this object, I commenced an undertaking which cost me nothing, but labour. I was now to tread a new, and, as I feared, a dangerous path, that of an author;—and in three weeks offered to the public my first publication, a small work on the political events of the times. It had, however, so favourable a reception, as to defray the expense of our passage to the Isle of France, on our way to England, whither it was my intention to proceed, in the hope of being able, with the aid of the good Mr. Neunborough's influence, to get my case successfully represented in the proper quarter.

Arrived

Arrived at the Isle of France, the blissful scenes of my youthful days once more greeted my view, and revived my drooping, disappointed spirit: we sat under the same bower which had sheltered us many years before. The assiduous attentions and cheerful conversation of Virginia's friends, especially of Messieurs Barais and Dubois, delighted us as they were wont to do:—long after the sun had set, and while the moon hung bright and dazzling in the blue expanse, would we sit, as before, on some romantic point of land, and watch the silvery waves. Parties of pleasure into the interior were again formed; and in short, the joys of early youth were renewed—but came not, as formerly, unalloyed with pain;—corroding care and anxiety somewhat marred our joys. Without friends or influence sufficient to procure me employment, I found it useless to entertain the hope of it in India: I saw the flower of my youth dying unprofitably away;—I knew the hour was to come (and it did come) which was again to separate me from Virginia. Leaving her with her mother and sisters, I set sail for my native land, after an absence of ten years, unhappy and alone, and with but twenty-eight dollars in my pocket, instead of the handsome competency which my youthful imagination had aspired to return with.

On our voyage home, we anchored at St. Helena for water. Napoleon was alive and well; the situation of his house at Longwood, as we viewed it from the summit of a craggy rock, overhanging a yawning precipice, was romantic, but gloomy; the waves of the ocean were seen from the immense height we had attained, rolling their frothy curls, in long and uniform rows; the wind, in intermitting gusts, whistled round us, while at intervals its sighs seemed to respond to the feelings of the extraordinary exile whose dwelling was before us. Of his person we in vain endeavoured to obtain a glimpse.

At the end of two months from my departure from St. Helena, I landed in England. The different impressions which, after an absence of a few short years, the same objects make on the mind, are worthy of remark. England now appeared to me a country different from that which, from uncertain recollection, I had formed of it. The very faces of her sons and daughters seemed to have changed, and her shores to have assumed another aspect; her

her coins too, presented a new appearance; and I was compelled to ask which was the half-crown,—the shilling, or the sixpence. It was not, however, either the country or the people that had altered,—the change was in myself. From my lengthened sojourn abroad, I had imbibed foreign notions, and was now viewing my native country with the curious eye and eager gaze of a foreigner; nor did I, as I walked the streets, escape observation; my dress of India woollens, and my gait, were those of a foreigner, and my skin was tanned completely brown. Long was it before surrounding objects became familiar to me, and before I reconciled myself to the change.

On my arriving in London, I repaired to the residence of a brother of my father's, of whom I learnt that my parents were still in Wales, and that, of the younger branches, some were grown up and married, others dead, and that all who were living were so scattered in various directions, as to place me in the situation of a stranger in my own land. One intimation, however, and I believe one only, afforded me delight,—and that was, that the good Mr. Neunborough was then in town, and to be seen at the Old Hummums, Covent Garden. I immediately repaired thither, but not meeting with him, left for him a memorial, which I had drawn up on my passage home, embracing the peculiarities attending the past events of my life, together with an urgent request that he would exert his influence to get my case efficiently represented in the proper quarter; and adding, that I would call in a week. At the end of that time I was shewn into his room. An interview with the friend and fostering patron of our youthful years, after a long absence, is attended with a moral feeling which is, beyond all power of description, affecting: it calls to mind a thousand tender recollections; but though, in my experience, this pleasure was not wanting, the contrast which my mind could not but institute between the delightful hours I had spent with him in my youth, and the heavy hours of my present difficulties, together with the foreboding prospects of the future, was painful in the extreme. But what, alas! pained me still more, was the change which was visible in the person of the man himself: he who had been manly, handsome, robust, and gay,—he whom I had left in his prime—was now, thin and wan;—that eye,

which

which could before express every emotion of the heart, had lost the lustre for which it had been remarkable; and that countenance which had beamed benevolence, a great portion of its expression: yet was his mind as vigorous, vivid, and comprehensive as ever.— "Come hither, Naufragus; sit down by my side."—"Ah, Sir, I have encountered many troubles since I left your happy roof!"— "So I find, Naufragus; my eyesight is too bad to admit of my reading your memorial, yet am I acquainted with its contents. I will bring your case before the notice of the proper authorities immediately, and I anticipate success, I can assure you. I will also introduce you to Sir William C——e. It is a pity your uncle discarded you at so early an age, for so childish an offence too:—but all may yet be for the best."

The nervous energy of his delivery, his well-known voice and manner, went directly to my heart, which, with its feelings, associated the recollection of the scenes of youth. I thought of all the circumstantials of his mansion—my happy home—the dining-room—the family pictures—the study—and the tea-room, the walls of which were decorated with two of his favourite pictures, illustrative of Shakespeare—the subject of one, the smothering of the young princes in the tower—of the other, the ravings of King Lear. When all these recurred to my mind, which the same instant caught the recollection of the features of his late wife, whom I could fancy I then saw before me, I could with difficulty restrain my feelings.—"Ah, Sir!" I exclaimed, "your late excellent lady, now in the mansions of rest, was indeed an angel, if ever there was one on earth, deservedly beloved by all who knew her: how kind she was to me!"—"Yes, Naufragus; but you saw comparatively little of her. Had you been with us oftener, you would have had reason to love her still more: but, let me tell you, you would be equally impressed in favour of my present wife, if you knew her, or you would be different from all other persons. As for me, God has been pleased to make me happy in this world; but my earthly career is nearly terminated; and, whenever he shall please to summon me away, he will, I trust, find me ready."

Thus would this excellent man apostrophize, and, at the same time, console me by his friendly manner.—"I am anxious," he said, "to get you reinstated in your employment, especially because

cause you must feel your separation from your young wife a double calamity. I will do what I can, Naufragus. Next Wednesday the question will be brought forward, and you may call upon me on Thursday morning."

I did so, but I was doomed to endure another disappointment. —"It was," said the good man, "a matter of impossibility: my interest is now, I find, on the wane, Naufragus; I have tried, but cannot succeed for you. Let me, however, conjure you to persevere;—be steady,—honest,—industrious,—and conscientious; and Providence will, one day, crown your virtue with its reward." Giving me a handful of bank-notes, which I in vain attempted to excuse myself from accepting, he bade me farewell for the last time;—in two years afterwards he was an inhabitant of another world.

I had now to endure the *greatest* trials of my existence, the recital of which would fill another volume. The reader may form some conception of them, by recalling to his recollection the less fortunate days of Peregrine Pickle, of Tom Jones, or of the worthy Vicar of Wakefield's eldest son, George. After allowing me to undergo an ordeal of two years' further experience of the "world," it pleased the same Providence who had supported me in the wilds of Pulo-Penang, in storms at sea, in the glens of Hindoostan, among the pestilential airs of Batavia, and amid the temptations attending an association with the "world" in society, to fix me, at last, unaided in any way by a single relation,—IN PORT, where I fully trust the remaining days of my earthly career will be passed in peace, and in gratitude to Him who has provided a place of "rest, for the sole of my foot," and to those friends who have been the instruments in His hands of fulfilling his pleasure. Satisfied with the experience I have gained, I feel no wish to see more—of the "WORLD!"

THE CONCLUSION.

It was not until a period of five years had elapsed since my arrival in England, that my circumstances would admit of my entering into engagements for the passage of Virginia to this country, which could not indeed be effected under much less a sum than one hundred pounds. At length, however, the desired arrangement was made, and she arrived at Gravesend on the fourth of January, 1825. Her impression, on first seeing London, fell far short of the expectations she had been led to entertain of it. London, she concluded, was like Calcutta—a city of palaces: how great then was her surprise to see the dull unembellished appearance of the houses, which, with the hurried step and gloomy looks of the passengers, made her think it the most dismal place she had ever yet seen, especially as she was then a stranger to English comforts! She also expressed her astonishment at the apparent want of gallantry in the men, from the elbows of several of whom she had received, when walking the streets, evident testimonies of their being in a hurry. Objects of charity too were what she was entirely unprepared to see; the idea of "white beggars" never having once entered her imagination: to all who implored her assistance would she afford relief, until, having frequently found my door beset by beggars, I was compelled to put some restraint upon the fulfilment of her amiable intentions. The London cries likewise appeared singular to her: as her power of mimicry was always exceedingly good, she used to imitate them, in order that I might explain the meaning of them to her;—but I was sometimes puzzled. One of the first was, as she styled it—"*Weep! weep!*" and one which I could hardly explain, as she knew neither the use of a chimney, nor the meaning of the word. The watchman's grunt—the fish-vender's call, and many other "concords of sweet sounds," which I understood not myself, required explanation. The first appearance of snow and ice—the dresses of countrymen in smock-frocks, whom she designated by "the big men in petticoats," also surprised her: but what more than any thing else, the walk of the English ladies*, who, she remarked, took such

* The promenade pace of the oriental ladies, is that of a light and languid lounge; the nature of the climate not admitting of a quick movement.

such mighty long strides, and were so rapid withal, that they appeared like dragoons going to a fair. Custom having now reconciled her to all these things, she seldom vents an expression of surprise, unless perhaps on witnessing a chaise drawn by dogs, or the cats watching at the neighbouring doors, precisely at the hour when the meat-man goes his round.

My parents, who are at present in Wales, have the prospect of attaining a good old age; and I of enjoying their society, which pleasure was denied me in my youth, when indeed I most needed it, but could not so well have appreciated its value. My uncle Barron I have not seen since his abandonment of me; but I hear that he still lives to enjoy his almost boundless wealth, although at an advanced age. As for my excellent friends, Lieutenants J. and R. Burjen, in whose society I had at Madras enjoyed many a happy and convivial hour, I in vain endeavoured, on my arrival in England, to discover the place of their residence, and had, of necessity, abandoned it as hopeless. One evening, however, as I was seated in the pit of Old Drury, marking with intense interest the rapid transitions in the countenance of our inimitable Roscius, Kean, in his personification of the mercenary Sir Giles, a noise in the gallery had caused me to turn my eyes from the stage; when, on again turning round, whose should they encounter but those of Lieutenants J. and R. Burjen, who having also been attracted by the noise, were still looking towards the gallery. A more happy, or unlooked-for recognition, never perhaps ensued among friends; and the circumstance of their having a young lady under their protection, alone prevented our going home together, late as it was, to " see the morning in." Since this fortunate but singular event, we occasionally enjoy each other's society at an English fireside, where we talk over our past adventures in the East. As for Bowers, he is still in India, seeking " the bubble reputation even in the cannon's mouth." Harcourt fell a victim to the unhealthiness of the climate of Bengal*, and lies buried in the churchyard of Chandernagore. Keys still resides at that settlement, and

* The climate of Bengal cannot be said to agree with the European constitution. It is observed, that persons of cold and spare temperament enjoy their health better than the robust and powerful, who soon fall a prey either to flux, dysentery, or fever.

and is likely to remain there to the end of his days. Endtfield and Basket continue to live in the enjoyment of that happiness which their virtues both entitle and qualify them to enjoy; and Moodoosooden Chetarjee, and Thompson, are still in Calcutta, doing remarkably well.

It may now be a natural question with some of my readers, what was the paramount impression which my mind received, on witnessing the various scenes and objects which presented themselves in the course of my travels and adventures;—what is the precise nature of the impression retained on my mind at the present day? or, in other words, what has been the result of my experiénce? In answer to the first question, I reply without hesitation, that a feeling of indescribable admiration was the chief sentiment of my mind, on witnessing the awful sublimity, as well as the endless variety, of Nature's works, whether animate or inanimate; and that the natural tendency of that admiration, to dispose the mind to devotional feeling towards Him who created, and governs all, produced on me its due effect. Secondly, that this feeling is impressed on my mind with a vividness and force never to be obliterated; and consequently, if I pronounce that to be the beneficial result of my experience, it may not appear, in the view of many of my readers,—one of *small price*: but, independently of all this, I have been led to trace, and gratefully to acknowledge, the protection of an all-wise and beneficent Providence. That the same fostering hand may continue to extend to all its creatures the power of enjoyment in prosperity, and its timely aid in extremity, and that all may be thankful for the boon, is the fervent hope and farewell of—NAUFRAGUS!

FINIS.

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